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No. 381

## OUR DEAD

BY EBBY E. REXFORD.

There are graves over hillside and valley  
Where sleep our beautiful dead,  
And the sentinel marbles are keeping  
Guard o'er each low-lying head.

There are graves in the dreary desert,  
And graves on the lone seashore,  
And many a dear one is sleeping  
Under the ocean's roar.

As the day fades into its twilight  
Our loved ones pass to their rest  
And we see them, lying all peaceful  
With folded hands on their breast.

Believing that death is life's evening,  
And after the long, sweet night  
They will wake in a fairer morning  
Than has dawned on mortal sight.

Rest in your graves, oh, dear ones!  
Sweet be your sleep, oh, dead!  
Life with its cares made you weary—  
Death gave you quiet instead.

Rest, while we miss you and whisper  
Some thought at the twilight of you.  
For always, oh, dear ones, we miss you,  
And always to you will be true.

"Richard is Himself Again."

## The Velvet Hand:

OR,

THE IRON GRIP OF INJUN DICK.

A Wild Story of the Cinnabar Mines.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,

AUTHOR OF "INJUN DICK," "OVERLAND KIT,"  
"ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOB," "KENTUCK  
THE SPORT," ETC., ETC.

## CHAPTER IV.

DICK TAKES A HAND IN THE FUN.

"STRING up the durned heathen!" yelled Yuba Bill, adjusting the noose round the neck of the affrighted Chinaman.

"Oh, lemme kick the savdest outen him first, me lord dook!" cried Bowers, who was nothing if not theatrical.

"Go easy, gents!" exclaimed Doc Slater, who headed the crowd gathered round the end of the rope, ready to run the unfortunate heathen up to the tree-branch. "Just give us the word when you are ready, and we'll fix the critter! We'll teach him to play roots on his free white men, the durned saffron-colored son of Confucius!" Doc was a scholar, if he was the cutest horse-thief that had ever escaped the hands of the Vigilantes.

"Me alle same Melican man; no hobbe, how can!" spluttered the celestial.  
"Shut up yer yamp!" yelled sweet William Yuba, in the same dulcet strains with which he was wont, when on a "tare," and taking possession of the street, to proclaim that he was monarch of all he surveyed, which he generally was until some quiet miner got tired of his "foolin'" and sailed into him with a club, thereby producing order in War-saw.

"Oh! men and brothers, has it come to this that we air agwine to be ruined by Chin-he cheap labor?" howled Bowers, wildly; "and he held three acres, which was an immoral possibility, 'cos I had two on 'em up my own sleeve myself, an' the moment the heathen showed his hand, three acres, an' claimed the pile, I sed, 'that's been cheatin' 'round this yer board!'"

"All ready!" cried Yuba.  
"Ye ho! and he goes!" responded the Doc, and he and his gang began to pull on the rope, when the sudden and unexpected arrival of Velvet Hand interrupted the proceedings.

"Hallo! what's the matter?" he cried.  
"Mind yer own business!" replied Yuba, savagely, and in supreme contempt; and as for Joe Bowers, who had only arrived in Cinnabar during the preceding night, he stared with open mouth at the velvet sport.

"Go 'long, an' don't interrupt the fun!" was Doc Slater's suggestion.  
"This ain't any of your funeral!" Colonel Tom Pipkin ejaculated, loftily.

"None of your business, eh?" cried Velvet Hand, taking a couple of strides toward the fellows who had hold of the rope.

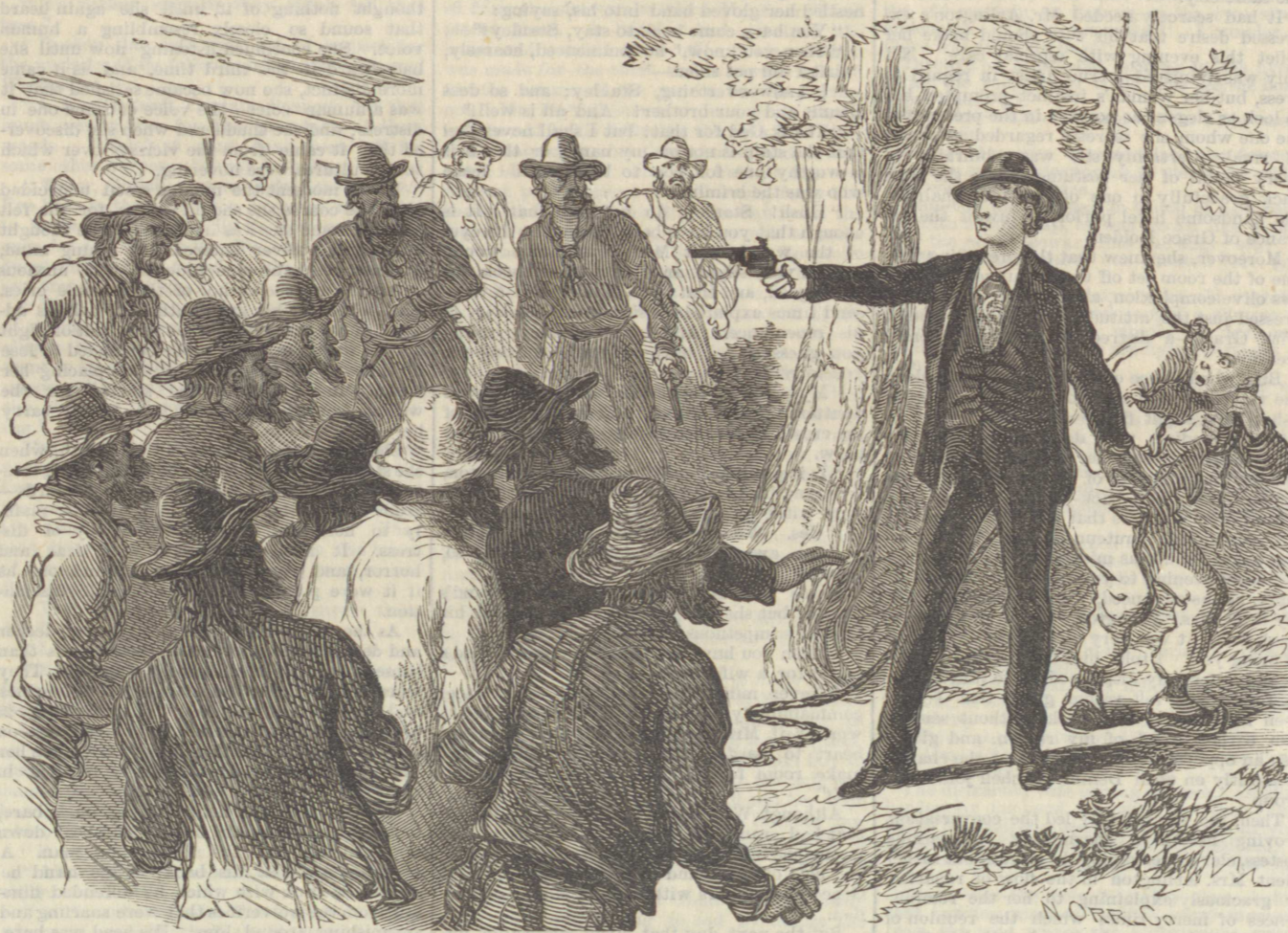
"No, sir-ee!" Doc responded, and he let go of the rope to feel for his six-shooter.

But before he could get his hand on the weapon, the sport had him by the throat, and the unceremonious manner in which he chuckled the renowned horse-thief over his head and tumbled him to the ground, completely demoralized, took all notion of fight out of the crowd. It was plainly evident that the velvet sport knew how to handle himself.

And, with the letting go of the rope, down came the celestial all in a heap.  
A nickel-plated revolver glistened in Velvet Hand's white fingers, and not a man in the crowd dared to test the marksmanship of the sharp.

"This is the only washee-washee in the town that can do up a shirt fit for a gentleman to wear, and I'm not going to stand by and see him abused! Now what is the trouble?" Dick Velvet cried.

"Pardner, lemme explain!" Joe Bowers replied, with becoming dignity. "This hyer yellin' cuss, fat an' ugly, has a-bin a-playin' it on us. He kem with the washin', he did for the noble ladies that reside in yonder doocal mansion," and Bowers pointed to the shanty from whence the crowd had emerged, the cele-



A nickel-plated revolver glistened in Velvet Hand's white fingers, and not a man cared to test his marksmanship.

brated Break o' Day saloon, notoriously the worst place of the kind in the town. "The John had the rocks; wid me own two lookin' eyes I sed 'em! We invited him fur to tackle us with the kerds. Games, he sed, he did not understand; but we, like men an' brothers, offered fur to teach the poor heathen. He was a stranger, an' we were ready to take him in, but he slipped upon it; he took us in, he did! He flaxed us right outen our boots; he won our ducats—four dollars an' a half of mine he corraled, an' then all on us went in to get hunk. We put up a job on him—Yuba carbined the kings, I yanked two aces, the Doc got the jacks, Col. Pipkin salivated the queens; we got him whar his 'ar was short, an' we slung out our pile an' went for him lively; and what was the result? I weep when I think of it! He saw us every time, an' arter all our shekels were up, we called for a sight, and he had three aces and two kings! Whar is our boasted civilization of sich things kin be, an' overcome us like a summer cloud without our special wonder! We went fur him! Wat we couldn't get by cunning we took by force; an' then we calclated to swing him up, jes' fur greases, but you hev played a full hand on us, an' raked the pile."

"Boys, I wouldn't interfere with your fun for the world," Dick replied, perfectly serious, "but put yourself in my place. This John is the only man in town who can do up a ruffled shirt. If you hang him, where is my washee-washee to come from, eh?"

The crowd shook their heads; the question was a conundrum, and they gave it up.  
"Now, I'll tell you what I'll do, boys; call it square on the heathen—you've cleaned him out, anyway—and I'll stand two rounds of drinks at the Occidental bar!"

"Bully for you!" cried Bowers, joyfully; "that's a heap sight better nor hangin' the John!"

The majority of the crowd agreed with the bummer; but the Doc, who had been so roughly handled, Yuba Bill and Col. Pipkin objected.

"No, no!" Bill cried, doggedly; "we're going to hang the heathen."

"Yes, of course," Doc added.  
"Certainly!" the colonel assented.

"You are not going to hang him!" and Velvet Hand spoke firmly, as with a single motion he threw the noose from the Chinaman's neck. "Scout!"

Hop-Ling-Ki did not wait for a second bidding, but sped away up the street as fleetly, almost, as a grayhound.

And not one of the crowd dared to follow him, no matter how great the desire, as long as the velvet sport was to the fore, the revolver gleaming in his hands.

The heathen disappeared around the corner of a shanty, and then the preserver turned to the three men, who stood, scowling, together.

"Now, gentlemen, if I've trod on any of your toes, I'm ready to give you all the satisfaction that you may require. Don't be bashful about speaking. I'll take you one at a time or two together, or three, or I'll fight the whole crowd at once!"

"Hol' on, me noble dook!" cried Bowers, impressively, "this ain't any of my funeral. You acted bully, and it does me proud to say so! Say, sport, if these aged eyes do not deceive me, I hav' seen you somewhar afore; your name is—"

"Oh, I don't think you ever saw me anywhere!" Dick replied, carelessly.

"Oh, yes, I hev; and I knows you—knows you like a book, me noble count! You kin run this town, if you want to fur all me."

The three discontented men had taken advantage of this diversion to sneak off; not a man of them cared to measure strength with the cool and plucky Velvet Hand.

The rest of the crowd adjourned to the hotel to accept the proffered hospitality of Dick, and as he followed the crowd into the Occidental, first bidding the stately Californian adieu, he happened to glance down the street and there beheld Blanche del Colma, half concealed behind a shanty. She was still on horseback, and it was plain that she had been attracted by the noise of the hanging match, and had witnessed the whole affair.

"Gambler and bully combined! A nice opinion she will have of me!" Dick muttered.

## CHAPTER V.

BUCK OF ANGELS.

As Velvet Hand entered the hotel he encountered a stranger in the entry; a tall, brawny-built fellow, roughly dressed, miner-fashion. There was just about light enough in the passageway to enable him to discover this much in regard to the man, and that was all.

"Say, stranger, where kin I find a doctor round?" asked the man, hastily. "My partner has just been bisted over his horse's head down yonder, an' I'm mighty skeered lest his durned neck's broken; leas'tway, I spect he's pretty badly hurt. Mebbe you might be willing to give a feller a lift with him up as far as the hotel."

"Certainly," answered the sharp, readily; "where is he?"

"Oh, a leetle piece down the road. We were a-comin' up from Angels, an' my partner had bin a-bistin' in more pison than he oughter, an' he rode his mule—like a durned galoot—right over a bowlder, an' the brute just rared up, an' then he pitched t'other end skyward an' sent my partner outen his saddle like a blamed old sky-rocket, an' if his neck ain't busted it will jest be a wonder!"

"Go ahead; we'll fetch him up to the hotel, and I guess I can scare up a doctor round the town somewhar."

The man led the way straight through the hotel to the back door and out into the street, while Velvet Hand followed, close behind.

"He's right down thar, jest round the bend, ahind them air bushes," the fellow explained, as he hurried along the road.

And now that Velvet Hand got a good view of the man's face, he saw—as he had thought—that he was a total stranger to him. He was not a particularly good-looking chap, and if the Cinnabar man had chanced to meet him alone on a dark road and at a dark hour, he certainly would have given him a wide berth and had his weapons handy.

"In from Angels, I am," the stranger informed his volunteer nurse; "Joe Smith of Angels, an' my pardner's Dave Buck. Mebbe you've hearn tell on Dave? He's jest the finest card-sharp in Northern California."

"No, I never hearn of him," Velvet Hand replied, but "in his mind's eye, Horatio," he determined that if Mr. David Buck's neck had not been dislocated by his unpremeditated downfall—and gentle Providence generally protects the helpless devotee of jolly Bacchus—he would speedily ascertain by what right the man from Angels held such a reputation.

As the twin hurried round the bend in the road their ears were saluted with a strange discord of groans and curses.

It was very evident that Buck of Angels was still in the land of the living.

The man was lying on his side in a little clump of bushes which had plainly broken his fall and saved him from serious damage.

"Whar air ye, ye durned ole Joe Smith?" he howled. "Air ye goin' to leave me hyer fur to die like a spavined mule, eh?"

"Hyar I am, Dave!" answered his partner, hurrying up to him; "an' this hyer gent has been kind enough fur to come all the way from the Occidental fur to help you. Whar are ye hurt?"

"All over," growled the prostrate man. "Blame my eyes! ef I think that I've got a whole bone left in my body. Ef you air any friend of mine, jes' cuss that blamed mule till you're black in the face."

"Do you think that you can walk?" asked Velvet Hand, approaching the prostrate man and kneeling down by his side. The Cinnabar sport quickly decided that the "pride of Angels" was more frightened than hurt, and that the strong liquor, so noted a product of the "Bar," which Mr. Buck evidently had been largely imbibing, had more to do with his inability to walk than any shock he had received by his fall.

"As quiet a mule as I ever see'd, too!" Joe Smith explained, and in truth the gray beast, grazing peacefully by the roadside, seemed gentleness itself.

"Wa-al, stranger, ef you would be so kind as to gin me a bit of a lift, mebbe I could walk a leetle," Buck admitted.  
"Certainly!"

Velvet Hand, bending over the fellow, took hold of him under the arms, while Buck grasped the Cinnabar man's shoulders, grunting with pain as he moved.

Velvet Hand half raised the fellow from the ground, Buck got a fair hold with his feet on the earth, and then, suddenly exerting his strength, gave a twist that tossed the Cinnabar man—who was totally unprepared for such a thing—over on his back.

And the moment that Velvet Hand's shoulders fairly touched the ground, the other fellow sprung upon him.

Then out from the clump of bushes came a third man, who also assailed the prostrate man.

Crushed to earth, despite his struggles, the three men, with stout lariats evidently provided for the emergency, bound Velvet Hand securely, first dextrously muffling his head in a thick Mexican scarf, to make any alarm impossible.

But the cool and acute sharp had never for a moment thought of crying out for help. Accustomed to wholly depend upon himself, to call for assistance was foreign to his nature.

The moment that the Cinnabar man was fairly on his back the truth flashed upon him—he had been entrapped. Buck of Angels was a fraud.

Why they had selected Velvet Hand he was at a loss to guess. What foe in the Shasta land was bold enough for such a plan of vengeance?

His assailants were taking particular care not to harm him. They had trusted him hand and foot, like a turkey ready for the roasting. If his life was sought, one good blow would have settled the matter.

Once securely bound, the assailants lifted him carefully from the ground; Buck of Angels mounted the gray mule; Velvet Hand was seated on the saddle before him, the other ruf-

fians taking care to lash him securely to their companion, and then off they set.

The eyes of the surprised man were securely bandaged, but his hearing was not impaired, and therefore he was somewhat surprised to note that no words were exchanged between the three strangers during or after the attack. Evidently the scheme had been carefully planned in advance in all its details, but what was its meaning?

Onward the party went at a rapid pace, turning aside from the main trail a short distance on and striking into a "blind" path which wound through the shrubbery, running almost parallel with the road, but about a quarter of a mile south of it.

For thirty minutes at least the party proceeded on their way, and the captured man readily understood that he was being conveyed to some secure retreat; but, being as familiar with all the Shasta region as any native red brave, he did not doubt that when the bandage was removed from his eyes he would be able to recognize the locality to which he had been conveyed.

Velvet Hand could hear the rustling of the pine needles as the party forced their way through the narrow passage, the trail of the night beasts of prey, and then easily distinguished the difference when the hoofs of the mule trod on the uncovered lava rock, and then, when the air grew thick around him, and he missed the breath of the free winds, he guessed that he had been conveyed into some mountain cavern.

## CHAPTER VI.

A FEARFUL ALTERNATIVE.

THE beast was halted, the prisoner removed from his back and seated upon a soft couch; then the scarf was taken from his head—and once again Velvet Hand was permitted to enjoy the privilege of his eyesight.

He looked around him. As he had anticipated he was in a cavern deep in the bosom of the mountain.

A few tallow candles, stuck in crevices in the walls, dimly lighted up the scene.

Three men beside himself were in the apartment, and each and every one of the three had carefully hidden his face under a black mask.

The road-agents—for the Cinnabar man guessed they were such—were all armed—in fact, fairly bristled with weapons.

Through their black masks their gleaming eyes shone, and Velvet Hand fancied that they all looked threateningly upon him.

The road-agents were seated upon elevated seats covered with buffalo-robes while the captive had been placed upon a skin couch on the floor, so that the three looked down like judges in council.

"You are the Cinnabar sharp called Velvet Hand?" the tallest road-agent said; he sat in the center and seemed to be the chief of the three. He was the one who had been concealed in the bushes and whose face the captive had not seen.

Velvet Hand looked inquiringly upon the gleaming eyes, shining through the holes in the black mask when the man spoke; it might be only fancy, yet the prisoner would have sworn that the owner of the voice was no stranger to him.

"Richard Velvet is my name, and I am sometimes called Velvet Hand," the prisoner answered.

"Well, we have taken considerable pains to secure an interview with you."

"I should suppose so," Velvet Hand dryly retorted.

"We have long desired to make your acquaintance."

"Indeed?"

"And as we deemed it improbable that you would accept an invitation to visit us in our mountain home, we took measures to compel you to come."

"The game is yours; I 'pass," Velvet Hand answered, in short parlance.

"Probably you are a little mixed as to why we have taken all this trouble?"

"Quite correct."

"We were anxious to make your acquaintance; and had an idea we might be mutually useful to each other."

"No *sabé*," responded the sharp, tersely.

"You don't understand?"

"No, sir."

"Do you know who we are?"

"Well, I think I can guess."

"We are men of liberal ideas; there is altogether too much inequality in this world; some men have too much money, others not enough; we propose to strike a balance."

"At the muzzle of a revolver, eh?"

"Correct!"

"On the point of a bowie-knife, we ain't 'ficular to a shade!" put in the road-agent on the right, and in his hoarse tones the Cinnabar sharp recognized the voice of Buck of Angels.

"And as you are a man who does business something after our fashion, we didn't know but what you might feel inclined to join teams with us. I am Captain Death, and these are the road-agents of Shasta. We own all the roads south of Yreka, and we intend to collect toll from everybody that travels over them, provided the pilgrims are well fixed and ain't too hefty on the fight."

Velvet Hand nodded to signify that he understood, and the longer he listened to the voice of the road-agent the more he became convinced that Captain Death was no stranger to the Occidental Hotel and the streets of Cinnabar.

"Come, Velvet Hand, you are the very man

we want," Captain Death continued. "We want one more in our band, and you are the very man to fill the bill. I'm told that you are not afraid of man or devil, that you are as good a pistol-shot as there is in the Shasta valley, and as you rob men now at cards, why, it will be right in your line to change the 'papers' for the revolver."

"I beg your pardon," cried Velvet Hand, shortly, "but you have made a slight mistake," and there was a gleam of anger in his dark eyes as he spoke. "I have never robbed anybody yet at cards; I try to play as fair a game as I know how, unless I get in with a lot of thieves, and then if they try to cheat me it is only fair, I take it, to turn the tables upon them."

"Oh, yes, I understand all about that!" Captain Death exclaimed, abruptly. "I never knew a gambler yet that didn't play on the square. Men of your trade are not as honest as we road-agents. We own up to skinning our game when you cry honesty, but it's all a matter of words, and we won't quarrel about it. What do you say now? Will you join the band of Captain Death?"

"What are the inducements?" Velvet Hand asked, in his quiet way.

"All booty will be divided into five parts; one share to each of the band and two to the captain. The captain—myself—to plan the jobs and receive unqualified obedience from the members of the band."

"That is I must obey any order that you may give whether it suits me or not."

"Exactly."

"And who guarantees me against being shot by the troops, or a well-armed passenger, or from being hung by some vigilance committee?" Velvet Hand demanded.

"The road-agents looked at each other, and then Captain Death burst into a hoarse laugh.

"Oho, my fine fellow, you must take your chances on that."

"I reckon I won't chip in!" Velvet Hand retorted. "I'm not used to following any man's lead but my own, and, least of all, going it blind. I'm very much obliged for your flattering offer, and when your time comes to be hung I'll travel a hundred miles to say good-by to any one of you."

The road-agents glared ominously at the bold speaker.

"This is your final decision?" demanded Captain Death, angrily.

"You can beat all your rocks on it!" Velvet Hand replied, boldly. "I'm no man's dog, and when I do choose a master it won't be one who travels with a halter around his neck."

"Bold words, considering that you are a helpless prisoner in our hands!" the road-agent leader cried.

"I generally speak my mind wherever I am."

"Well, since you have refused our offer, now hear our little game!" Captain Death added. "We have got you foul and we intend to make something out of you. You're the king card-sharp of Chinabar, and I reckon that you must have feathered your nest pretty well; now we propose to make you shell out. How much are you worth—ten thousand dollars?"

"I reckon that I ain't."

"Five thousand then?"

"Yes, I guess I can touch that figure."

"Good! Write us an order on your banker for five thousand dollars; I'll send and have it cashed, and when the messenger returns you can go free."

"Oh, I reckon that I won't do that," Velvet Hand said, coolly.

"If you won't sign freely we shall be compelled to use unpleasant means," returned the road-agent. "We'll give you one hour to think the matter over, and then, if you still persist in your refusal, we'll slice off about an inch of your right ear; then another hour to consider the matter, and if you are still obstinate a similar slice off the left ear, and so on until both ears are gone, and then we'll commence on your fingers. They call you Velvet Hand, I believe, because you have such a light, womanly touch; we'll cure you of that if you hold out long enough, and then your pads can call you 'stumps.' Come on, boys, we'll have this high-toned gentleman to solitary reflection."

And the road-agents withdrew to an outer apartment of the mountain cavern.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 380.)

## TO MA BELLE

BY E. L. W.

Like the gentle summer breeze  
On its way to sunset sea,  
Unseen in its harmonies,  
Is the thought of thee;  
Something gentle, sweet and rare,  
Even as the perfumes are.

## Her Husband's Friend.

BY LUCILLE HOLLIS.

"WINIFRED, I wish you would dress yourself as becomingly as possible to-night. I have promised to call with you upon a friend," Mr. Arlington said to his wife, as they entered the handsome dining-room of their hotel and passed down it smiling and bowing to their acquaintances.

"What friend, Jamesie?" Mrs. Arlington asked, shaking out her napkin.

"Grace Holden."

Over Winifred Arlington's face passed a shade of pain or displeasure, as she turned her searching eyes upon her husband. Great, gray eyes were, and slightly gloomy now, as she answered, rather coldly:

"May I ask why you desire me to visit that woman who, you know, is an object of supreme indifference to me?"

"I am sorry that you take that tone, Winifred," Mr. Arlington responded, somewhat sternly. "Knowing that Grace Holden is a dear friend of mine, it seems to me that you might care a little to cultivate her acquaintance. At all events, she has come to live at the St. Cloud, and I have promised to take you there to-night to see her. And if you desire to please me you will make some effort to keep up a future polite if not a cordial intercourse with her."

"And I am to arrange my toilet with especial care, that your 'dear friend' may be moved to approval of your wife—with a faint flavor of irony."

"Grace is anxious to know and love you; and I am sure she will appreciate your exquisite taste in dress," Mr. Arlington explained, adding: "It is very likely that we may meet Dennis Mitchell there this evening."

"Miss Holden seems to be a great favorite of gentlemen."

"She is equally a favorite with women, my dear, who view her with unprejudiced eyes."

Mrs. Arlington flushed slightly under this rebuke to her covert disparagement of her husband's friend; but she inwardly, with each

word of Mr. Arlington's in her praise, grew less and less inclined to be just toward the woman whom she believed he must once have dearly loved. If there was any one disagreeably prominent fault that Winifred Arlington possessed, it was jealousy; but she was too sensible and conventionally self-controlled to allow this passion to often sway her; only in regard to her husband, whom she adored, was she unable to curb the tormenting demon. She had met and become engaged to Mr. Arlington in France. Two years afterward, when she returned to her home, to prepare for her marriage, she had heard of her betrothed's intimacy with this Grace Holden. To her question concerning the lady, he had answered:

"I have known her almost a lifetime, and think her one of the sweetest women on earth."

Instantly Winifred's jealous love resented such praise awarded to another woman by the man who was to make her his wife; and this feeling was intensified when the two met, briefly, at Winifred's wedding, and the bride discovered that Grace was wondrously lovely, and noted the almost reverential devotion with which the bridegroom bent over her little white-gloved hand.

Mrs. Arlington was glad that before her return from her wedding-tour Miss Holden had left town for two years of travel abroad; and now the first disturbing element of her married happiness arose with this jealous displeasure that the lady had again taken up her abode in the same city.

It had scarcely needed Mr. Arlington's expressed desire that his wife should make her toilet this evening with especial care. Not only was Winifred a true artist in regard to dress, but her woman's instinct prompted her to look as elegant as possible in the presence of the one whom she secretly regarded as a sort of rival. Certainly she was admirable in every detail of her costume, when she sunk back gracefully in one of the satin chairs of the handsome hotel parlor, to await the entrance of Grace Holden.

Moreover, she knew that the prevailing rosy hue of the room set off to advantage her colorless olive complexion, and that her posture expressed just the attitude she meant to assume with Grace—a degree of indifferent condescension.

But, when Grace came swiftly, lightly along the velvet-covered corridor, and into the salon—her tiny, slight figure draped in a trail of white grenadine, with dainty lavender bows deftly disposed about her costume and holding fast her magnificence of yellow hair that was braided down her back—there was an easy grace in her manners that entirely disregarded any perceptible hauteur on her guest's part and sustained her as mistress of the situation.

"Good-evening to you both," she said, smiling, as she advanced, "and especially to you, my dear Mrs. Arlington. I am very glad to meet you. It was very nice of Mr. Arlington to bring you. I told him this morning that I should be sorely displeased if he failed to do so, for I have felt rather guilty that I have been here nearly two weeks without sending him earlier word of my return, and giving you an opportunity to come; and she chatted pleasantly on until Dennis Mitchell joined the group.

Then, too, she brightly led the conversation, proving herself a charmingly entertaining hostess, cleverly engaging the elegant but rather silent Mrs. Arlington in the flow of remarks, or graciously explaining to her the reminiscences of merry times which the reunion of herself and her two old friends called forth.

"Cannot you help us to make a party for the races to-morrow afternoon?" asked Mr. Arlington of Grace, as they arose to separate. "Dennis intends going, and Winnie has always desired visiting Jerome Park."

"Thank you, I should enjoy doing so, exceedingly; but cannot tell you, definitely, before the morning."

"Very well. I will stop as I go up-town, and take you to lunch with us if you can go. Try to arrange it so that you can," he answered.

When the good-nights had been said, Winifred's rankling pain found slight expression in her scornful voice, as she questioned:

"And what do you think of this rather forward paragon of a friend of my husband's, Mr. Mitchell?"

The tall, handsome gentleman glanced swiftly at his friend, and saw the faint shadow of pain that flitted across Mr. Arlington's face.

Nor could he fail to understand the secret revealed by Mrs. Arlington's tones. But it was not for him to make known her husband's past life, with which Grace Holden stood so strangely and closely connected.

"I have always thought that Wordsworth's lines,"

"A perfect woman, nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort, and command,"

might well have been written of Grace Holden."

"But you must acknowledge," said Winifred, determined to maintain her position alone, since her husband and friend both stood so loyally by her rival's standard, "that she is far too inferior in physique to suggest such words."

Ordinarily the lady would not have made a remark in such ill-taste; she herself being noticeably tall and commanding of stature; but she was thoroughly piqued at the admiration which she was determined not to understand.

"Perhaps you are correct in that criticism; it is rather surprising what a wonderful amount of character animates that small woman,"

Dennis agreed, laughingly. He really had always admired Arlington's wife, and regretted sincerely the unpleasantness she was feeling toward her husband's friend.

The next day Mrs. Holden was Mrs. Arlington's guest at luncheon; but the meeting between them would congeal into formality—despite Grace's vivacity—here, where the latter lady could assume her own prerogatives as a hostess. When the meal was over, while Miss Holden waited in the parlor, and Winifred had run up to her room to put the finishing touches to her handsome toilet, Mr. Arlington joined his friend, and found her leaning her brow wearily against a dark bronze upon the mantle.

"Grace."

She turned swiftly—a worn, sorrowful look in her violet eyes, and about her trembling lips.

"James, is your wife going to dislike me? Must I always be lonely? Am I never to have friends?" she asked, impetuously.

It was the first time that James Arlington had heard a wail from this woman's brave heart, and it fairly convulsed his features with the pain of the wound it gave him.

"And to think that I am to blame for this," he said, with bitter self-reproach.

Instantly his tone, and a reckless gleam that came into his eyes, restored Grace to her calm self-repression.

"Hush!" she answered him; "all will come right in time. I shall yet find some one to love."

Winifred swept into the room.

"Here is Mr. Mitchell, and if Miss Holden has finished her discussion of love with my husband, we will go," she answered, coldly.

The eloquent blood rushed to Grace's cheeks, but she met Mrs. Arlington's glance, steadily, as she replied:

"I cannot say that any discussion upon that subject which Mr. Arlington and I have had is ended, but the mere interruption of change of place will not interfere with it," and, summoning Mr. Mitchell to give her his arm, Miss Holden calmly went to her place in the carriage—little dreaming in what peace to her sore heart this drive should result.

The day was perfect, and the stand crowded with a fashionable, gay, excited throng. Under the magnetic influence of the weather and surroundings the perceptible chill which had fallen upon the Arlington party was, for the time, dissipated. At the close of the races they made their way, laughing and talking, toward their carriage. Waiting upon the platform for its arrival, a sudden exclamation from Grace startled them all.

"Good God! Stanley Arlington!"

Three faces in that group suddenly blanched; and the stranger, who stood as if struck dumb by this sudden encounter, was as marble-pale as his brother, and friend, and Miss Holden.

Grace was the first to speak again, with almost magnetic self-possession assuming the control of the strange scene; though there was an awing revelation of love in the way she nestled her gloved hand into his, saying:

"You have come back to stay, Stanley?"

"Then you know," he commenced, hoarsely, "that I did not shout—"

"I know everything, Stanley; and so does Dennis and your brother! And all is well!"

"Thank God for that! But I shall never feel that the stain is not on my name, or that it is a worthy one for you to bear, until I learn who was the criminal."

"Hush! Stanley, do not say that. It is enough that you have been cleared in the eyes of the world; that Mr. Wyndham's wound proved very slight, and the forged check was made good, and that the offender has a thousand times expiated his sin in the sincerity of his repentance. And I, oh! Stanley, cannot you guess how I have suffered—waiting for you to return?"

"My precious, loyal wife," he breathed, with unutterable tenderness; and in the midst of the crowd he touched his lips reverently to her brow.

"Is it possible," exclaimed James Arlington, wringing his brother's hand, "that Grace was your wife?"

"Yes. We were married the night before I went away; I had come to tell you so, when—"

Grace put her hand over her husband's mouth; but she was powerless to prevent his brother's impetuous outbreak:

"Then you have the noblest woman in God's world for a wife! And I am—"

"Never mind what you are," said Grace, commanding; "here is your carriage. I wonder if Mrs. Arlington will find it in her heart to pardon this peculiar reunion and make room for my husband as well as myself."

Although Winifred did not understand much that had transpired she was conscious of the wrong she had done Stanley Arlington's wife, and held out her hand in a silent apology; and Grace placed hers within it as a seal of pardon.

But the next day that silent avowal of understanding between the two women was a hundred times ratified, when Winifred Arlington walked swiftly into her sister-in-law's room and took her in her arms, and kissed her passionately, crying:

"Grace, you are the dearest woman in the world!"

"James has told you?"

"Everything! Of his temptation, and forgery, and frenzied shot at Mr. Wyndham; and of Stanley's rash flight when wrongly suspected of it all; and how you, with Dennis Mitchell's help, nobly saved my husband from the consequences of his sins and led him toward a new life—though through him you had lost your love. And now, I know that it was to save James worse remorse that you never spoke of your marriage. Oh! Grace, how can we love you enough?"

"How, indeed?" asked James Arlington, following his wife into the room, with his arm locked in that of his brother. "I could not accept your bearing the burden of my secret longer, Grace. Winifred and Stanley know all; and have forgiven all!"

"Yes, my darling; and, thank God, we two men, who because of the Arlington traits of weakness in our blood have made your life so long bitter and lonely, will be strong and worthy, henceforth, because of the strength wherewith you have saved us," said Stanley, gravely.

Grace only bowed her lovely head in joy deep and unutterable, while Winifred whispered:

"God bless you, my husband's friend."

## BURY ME IN THE MORNING.

BY MARY REED.

Oh, bury me in the morning,  
When the sun is shining bright;  
Bury me out to my narrow grave,  
In the new day's rosy light.

Let no cold, unmeaning sermon  
O'er my lifeless form be said—  
Send your silent prayer to Heaven,  
Bending over my clay-made bed.

Simply read that loving message  
Which Christ has to the weary come;  
Read it not from lofty pulpit—  
But above my lowly tomb.

Sing a low, sweet song of parting  
As my coffin door sinks down,  
And for benediction murmur,  
"Jesus, Savior, take thy own!"

## The Giant Rifleman:

OR,

Wild Life in the Lumber Regions.

BY OLL COOMES.

AUTHOR OF "SURE-SHOT SETH," "DAKOTA DAN," "RED BOB, THE BOY ROAD-AGENT," ETC.

### CHAPTER XV.

A HEROIC GIRL'S FIGHT FOR LIFE.

AN August sun, almost sultry hot, shone from a clear sky, while not a breath of air was moving.

Silent and dreary lay the Blue Marsh in the heart of the great woods. Deserted and silent seemed the lonely hut of the old cranberry-picker; and yet the door stood ajar, and as the sun crossed the zenith, the old man and his pretty grandchild, Ida Zane, emerged from the hut, and walked slowly down the green slope to the creek, where lay two Indian

canoes made of bark. Each of them carried a willow basket, for they were on their way to the marsh for whortleberries—this crop now being ripe.

Each one took a canoe, and after paddling down the stream some distance, Ida landed on one side and her grandfather on the other. The former tied up her canoe, then turning, walked out into the low bushes that were laden with their dark, luscious berries, and began her labor. Her little fingers darted here and there among the bushes with a dexterity that could only come of practice. Now and then she paused to eat a berry, or to glance around her to relieve her head of its dizziness, and her eyes of the blur superinduced by the excessive heat.

Not a breath of air stirred the bushes, nor passed over wood or swamp. Not a sound save the twitter of birds, that had come to feast on the purple berries, broke the stillness of the place.

But busily pretty Ida Zane picked away. An hour or more had passed; her basket was half filled, when suddenly a faint sound, like a far-off human voice, fell upon her ears.

She ceased her labor, and tipping her hat back upon her neck, she pressed her berry-stained finger to her lips, as if to invoke deeper silence around her. Thus she listened for some time; but she heard nothing, and all she could see was a few vultures, wheeling and circling in the air, over the woods to the south of the marsh.

But this was a very common sight, and she thought nothing of it, until she again heard that sound so closely resembling a human voice. She continued listening now until she had heard it the third time, and as it came more distinct, she now became satisfied that it was a human voice—the voice of some one in distress; and she shuddered when she discovered that it came from the vicinity over which those vultures were hovering.

For a moment the maiden stood undecided as to the course she should pursue, for she felt satisfied some one was in distress. The thought of deception never entered her young mind, and her heart became touched with anxious sympathy for the author of those feeble cries.

She looked for her grandfather, to ask his advice in the matter; but he was out of sight among the bushes, and so she concluded to lose no time in hunting him up, but placing her basket in her canoe she started for the woods fast as her little feet would carry her.

She ran on until nearly out of breath, when she stopped to listen, for the overshadowing trees now concealed her guide—the buzzards—from view. She had not long to wait; plainly to her ears came that sad cry of distress. It filled her breast with fear and horror, and yet it drew her on and on, as if it were possessed of some terrible fascination.

As the little berry-picker advanced deeper and deeper into the woods, other sounds than those of human suffering became audible. They were the gibbering and snarling of wolverines and the shriek of vultures. With her heart in her throat, brave little Ida moved on—on until a frightful, startling scene burst upon her view—a scene from which she recoiled in horror.

In the center of a little opening, on a bare, stony ridge, where the boiling sun beat down unobstructed, lay the form of a man. A great stone was at his back; in his hand he clutched a stick with which he defended himself from the wolverines that were snarling and skirmishing around him. His head was bare, and the hair all matted with gore. His face was streaked with blood, and wore a look of agony that could only have come of long suffering. His clothing was tattered and torn as if by the teeth of the wolverines; and, taken altogether, he was an object of the most lugubrious and wretched appearance.

Ida Zane had ever looked upon. And yet she saw that he was young—a mere boy in years.

Back of him lay the carcass of a deer, festering and blistering in the sun. It was the deer slain the day before by Randolph Spencer, and it was the putrid flesh of this animal that attracted the vultures and wolverines there; but when they came, they seemed more anxious to feast upon the living than the dead.

After she had taken in the sight, and had fully comprehended the situation, brave little Ida Zane advanced to the rescue of the suffering youth. She uttered a little cry that sent the cowardly wolverines scampering away into the woods, and the vultures into the air. Then she turned to the wounded boy; but before she could speak, he raised his eyes, and cried out:

"Oh, thank God! my prayers have been heard!"

"Oh, sir!" cried Ida, excitedly, "what is the matter? Are you wounded?"

"Wounded almost unto death, fair stranger!" he responded, lifting his blood-shot eyes to hers.

"Who are you, and where is your home? Can I help you?" Ida asked, bending over him like an angel of mercy, while tears of sympathy welled up into her eyes.

"My name is Darral—Nathan Darral."

"Darral—Nathan Darral," she repeated.

"I was wounded three nights ago," he continued, "by being thrown out of a boat and striking my head upon a stone in the water. How I escaped, I hardly know. I have a vague recollection of floating and floating for hours on the water; then of creeping away into the woods to elude some awful danger. I must have been delirious, for I was very weak from loss of blood. Finally, a raging fever set in, and it seemed as though I would surely burn up. When this subsided, and full consciousness returned, hunger next seized upon me; but I was unable to walk, and so I crawled off through the woods—eating some berries and roots. At length I came to the carcass of the deer, where I feasted my hunger upon the tainted flesh; and here have I remained ever since—growing weaker instead of stronger. The hot sun pouring upon my head, and the wolverines together, will soon put an end to my suffering, and—"

"No, no, sir!" cried the maiden, in wild excitement; "they shall not come near you; besides, I can assist you to the shade. Then I will call grandpa; you shall not die."

"Do not excite yourself about me, fair girl," said the almost exhausted youth; "I cannot walk—my limbs are paralyzed. You cannot move me from here."

"Then give me that knife in your belt," she replied, and lifting the weapon from its sheath, she bounded away across the opening to the woods and soon came back with some bushes with which she erected a shade over the unfortunate young bee-hunter.

"God bless you, little woman," he said, gratefully, as the cool shade seemed to pervade his spirit with renewed strength; "will you tell me what your name is? and where you reside?"

"I live at the Blue Marsh with Daniel Berry; but my name is Ida Zane. Grandpa Berry is not very far from here, so I will run

and bring him over, and together we can help you home."

"No, no; stay, Ida," he said, quickly; "you are nearly exhausted now, child; wait until you have been well rested."

"But you are suffering, Nathan Darral," she replied calling him by name with a child-like familiarity.

"I am feeling a great deal better now, I assure you. This shade eases my pain. Oh, the tortures of this day! The Lord only knows what I have suffered; and even yet, my eyes seem ready to burst out of my head. But I know I will get better soon."

Tears of pity welled up into the eyes of the little berry-picker. She took off her hat, and, with sisterly kindness, fanned the feverish face of the suffering youth. Ida Zane did not regard him as a more sophisticated girl would a stranger. She knew him only as a suffering fellow-being, to whom her young soul went out with all her woman's pity and sympathy—a sufferer in need of the tenderest assiduities of gentle hands.

The cool breeze that kissed Nattie's cheeks acted with the power of a soothing balm. It drove away much of the pain that the heat had produced; but at the same time he felt a strange drowsiness stealing over him. Heavy weights seemed pressing downward upon his eyelids, and objects became dim and visionary to his sight. He struggled hard to keep awake, and it required every effort of his will to overcome the reaction that was but the result of the alleviation of his suffering. His nervous system was giving way as the pain, that had kept it up, subsided; and he would soon have been sound asleep had he not suddenly been roused by a cry of excitement from Ida's lips.

The maiden had discovered that the wolverines were returning—reinforced—a dozen strong; while overhead the vultures were again wheeling and circling in the air.

She sprang up, and seizing a stout stick, stood ready to beat the animals off. She apprehended but little danger from them at first, for she supposed they were attracted there by the dead deer; but she knew it was all important to keep them from the carcass, for once there they would not hesitate to attack the wounded lad who lay so near. So she frightened them away, but they soon came back and set up a terrible wrangling and snarling. This brought others. One by one their force was gradually increased; and they grew bolder as their numbers grew stronger. They encircled the little glade, a hundred strong!

Ida Zane stood over the helpless youth, club in hand. She now became seriously alarmed for his safety, and this uneasiness increased as she saw the force of the animals growing stronger and stronger. She knew they were naturally cowardly when in small force, but when in large numbers, they were ferocious and deadly.

As the wolverines advanced closer and closer upon the tempting quarry, the vultures descended lower and lower. They knew each other, for at many a forest banquet they had feasted together. They were companion ghoul.

Gradually the cowardly beasts contracted their circle by advancing and retreating—gaining a few inches at each advance, and using an almost human instinct in endeavoring to crowd some of their number forward upon the prostrate form of the young bee-hunter.

Bravely little Ida stood at her post, and plied her club upon the beasts that had come so close that she could now rap them over the head. Nathan's very soul became inspired by the wonderful courage of the maiden, and he endeavored to assist her. He grasped his stick and feebly raised it aloft. But, despite their united efforts, the wolverines crowded closer and closer.

At length a number of them reached the carcass of the deer, and, hungry and ravenous, they began tearing at the flesh, and fighting and tumbling around it, a seething mass of shaggy forms. Others dashed on and joined at the feast and fight, and in endeavoring to drive them away, a huge old male turned and seized Ida by the skirts of her dress; but a well-directed blow caused it to release its hold and retreat.

Not the half of the maddened, voracious beasts could get near the carcass of the deer, and at length those on the outside of the seething horde turned and began crowding toward Nathan.

"Oh, my heavens, they will kill you!" Ida cried, in a tone of wild distress.

"Run, Ida, run, and save yourself!" the youth said; "never mind me; I am ready to die."

had Old Wolverine not seized a club and dashed in among them; and after braining more than a dozen, put the rest to flight and sent the dogs in pursuit.

"By the witches of Salem!" the old hunter exclaimed, when the battle had ended, and he had turned to address the maiden, "the girl is stone dead!"

He saw the form of the girl lying unconscious upon the earth. The reaction following her rescue had been too sudden for her delicate nerves, and she sunk down in a dead faint.

"She has fainted, Wolverine," said a voice at the old man's side; and turning, he saw for the first time the form of a man lying under some leafy boughs.

With wildly-staring eyes the old man gazed in upon him, for, though he recognized the voice, he did not see the face.

"Don't you recognize me, Wolverine?" "Oh, great Hannibal!" cried the hunter; "it is Nattie Darrell! By golly-aint, boy, we thought you'd gone over the hills—war drowned to other night, as we couldn't find you high nor low."

"I have been nearer dead than alive since that night; but, Wolverine, look after that girl. God never made a more heroic young soul. For one hour has she stood over me and fought those Wolverines."

"Poor little rosbud," sighed the hunter, mopping the perspiration from his brow with his sleeve; "a dancin' my canteen 'I do her good," he advanced, and kneeling by the maiden's side, raised her head.

"Ho, friend Wolverine! you have your hands full!" a voice suddenly exclaimed. Wolverine looked up and saw a tall figure enter the glade. It was Goliath Strong.

"Ah, it is you, Goliath!" cried Nattie—"our big-hearted guide of several days ago."

"Nattie, my boy!" exclaimed the giant hunter, "I am rejoiced to see you alive. Your friends are mourning you as lost."

"Then they escaped that night?" "Yes, but they are several miles from here now, but—" and he turned to Wolverine, "old man, what is the trouble there?"

"A gal, Goliath, a gal—sweet as any rosbud the sun ever warmed into life. That's what I've got, Goliath."

The giant hunter advanced to Wolverine's side, and, stooping, he gazed down into the face of the still half-unconscious girl. An exclamation burst from his lips, and he started back with surprise written upon his bearded face.

"Do you know her, Goliath?" asked Wolverine, noticing the man's emotions.

"No," responded the hunter.

"Well, ain't she a nice one, though? Jews and Gentiles! you'd ort to 'a' seed her fightin' Wolverines away from the boy that. But see here, Goliath, I believe you know her—leastwise, you are terrible worked up. Does the purty face o' a woman ailed effect you that-a-way? I know it does some men—queer 'bout it, too."

"Wolverine, do you know that girl?" "Never soot peepers onto her before; but she's comin' to—just wait and she'll soon be able to speak for herself."

Ida soon recovered full consciousness; and when able to speak, the sound of her voice seemed to increase Goliath Strong's emotions more than ever.

The maiden was greatly rejoiced when she learned that Nattie had been saved from the beasts and vultures. She at once suggested that he be removed to her home for care and treatment. She would listen to no refusal from Nattie; but in her childlike and impulsive way insisted on his becoming their guest at Blue Marsh until he was able to go upon his way.

As there was really no alternative, the youth consented, though not against his will by any means, to be removed to Old Cranberry's cabin.

Goliath Strong and Old Wolverine carried him down to the creek; and then, while they rested upon the bank, Ida ran on after her canoe, further up the stream.

While waiting her coming with the boat in which to carry the youth up to the cabin, Old Wolverine went back to the glade to secure the scalp of the dead Wolverines, upon which there was a bounty.

When alone with Nattie, Goliath Strong said: "Nattie, I am not going up to that cabin."

"Not going? Why not, Goliath?" "My reason is a very vague one."

"I noticed, Goliath, that you were agitated by Ida's face," Nattie confessed.

"It was a wonderful pretty face—a face that would agitate the heart of any man, or boy either, I observe; but, Nattie, I have a request to make of you, and that is, that you note carefully everything about the home of the old cranberry-picker. Find out the number in his family, their names, if you can without being impertinent, their former residence, and so forth. Will you promise me this, Nattie?"

"I will, Goliath," said Nattie, as a faint light began to dawn upon his mind.

"You will probably be able to be out in a few days, and one week from to-morrow morning I will call here at this point—perhaps with the other boys—to confer with you."

"All right, Goliath; I will meet you," replied the young bee-hunter; "for I'm getting interested in you—I think I can see a little further than I could. I don't believe you are really what you appear to be—a hunter, I have wondered a great many times since we first met why you inquired so particularly into my family record; and the boys wondered, too. We finally came to the conclusion that you were—"

"The Unknown Marksman?"

"No, not; but a—"

"I have been arrested and found guilty of being that destroyer since I last saw you," again interrupted the hunter, "but I was released upon evidence of the Unknown Marksman. Ah! here comes the maiden."

In a few moments she touched the shore at the hunters' feet, when Nattie was placed in the canoe in an easy, reclining position. There was no room for any other than the maiden and youth in the canoe, even had it been the desire of either of the hunters to accompany them; so, after a few kind, parting words, "da dipped her paddle and the little bark glided away up the stream."

Goliath Strong leaned upon his rifle and gazed after the receding boat with a strange, thoughtful expression upon his face. He seemed to have forgotten his existence until aroused from his reverie by Old Wolverine, who came swinging down the hill, with his dogs at his heels, whistling—"Over the hills and far away."

"Why, Goliath, are they gone?" he asked, as he approached the hunter.

"Yes; the boat would carry no more; besides, I had no desire to go over there; for, Wolverine, that secluded hut—and the big hunter pointed away toward the cabin of the old berry-picker with a wild, tragic look—"I solemnly believe holds a secret—a secret which the silence of past years has kept as still as though locked in the tomb of the dead!"

"Whew!" whistled Old Wolverine, in surprise.

"One by one" the quiet hunter continued, as if speaking to himself, "the clouds are beginning to break away. Who knows what the future may reveal?"

Several minutes of silence ensued; then the two men turned and, without a word, entered the dark, green woods.

## CHAPTER XVI

## SHADOWING A NIGHT-WALKER.

OLD WOLVERINE and Goliath Strong bent their footsteps in the direction of Camp Spencer after turning their backs upon the Blue Marsh; and after a couple hours' brisk walking came within the sound of the lumbermen's axes.

The crash of falling trees directed their course, and keeping clear of the workmen they passed around toward the camp. But not their intention to go to the houses; but Goliath had expressed a desire to examine the location of the camp and its surroundings without himself being seen.

East of the camp every tree, except one, had been cut down and taken away. This one was a tall, majestic pine around whose base grew a clump of dense undergrowth. On the edge of this clearing Old Wolverine and Goliath halted.

The latter ran his keen eye over the clearing, noting everything closely. Presently he fixed his gaze upon the solitary pine and remarked: "It's rather singular they didn't fall that tree."

"Reckon they left that out of respect for the majesty of its fallen companions," observed Wolverine.

"I hardly think Captain Spencer has that much veneration for the grandeur of these woods. I think it must have been left for some other purpose; it may be hollow."

"Never, Goliath; you can't fool me on that. I've been in the woods too long not to be able to know a hollow tree by its external appearance fur as I can see it. No, sir; I'll go you a ducat that it's as sound to the very heart as any tree in Michigan."

"Well, that may all be; but I have a way of clutching at straws, instinctively, that most always helps me out of the rapids. Now, I want to look a little closer at that tree the first opportunity I have; and that will be soon, for the shadows of evening are already gathering."

The two men waited in the woods until darkness set in, and were about to approach the lone tree when they saw a light coming from the camp directly toward them. Crouching low they watched the moving light. They soon discovered it was a lantern in the hands of a man, who, passing near them, went on into the forest.

"That feller's Cap. Spencer, sure'n thunder."

"Let us follow him; it may be a clue."

"Easy then, Goliath," and the two glided from their covert and crept softly away after the light.

Down through the deep woods they followed on with the dogged patience of Indian warriors. At length the sharp barking of a dog caused the light to stop. A man's voice was heard to call out from the darkness beyond, to which he of the lantern answered:

"Randolph Spencer."

"All right; come ahead, captain," was the reply.

"Ah!" exclaimed Old Wolverine. "I know where we are now; that's the Shingle-Weavers' camp."

"Indeed? Well, now would be a good time to advance while the dog is barking at Spencer. Wait here, Wolverine, till I come back."

As the light had been following disappeared in the Shingle-Maker's hut, the big hunter stole softly forward. The dog continued to bark, but no voice challenged the hunter.

Half an hour passed when the light again appeared, and moved away in the direction it had come. Before it was out of sight Goliath Strong was at Wolverine's side.

"Come, Old Wolverine," he said, in apparent delight; "let's follow the light back. This night's work will not be for nothing."

Again they glided away upon the trail of the unsuspecting man. For two hours longer they followed him.

At length they reached the edge of the clearing. Here the light was put out, much to Goliath's regret. But the moon was shining, and to the happy surprise of the two hunters they saw their man turn to the right and disappear in the thicket surrounding that solitary pine.

Wolverine, what did I tell you, old boy, about that? I'll bet you it plays an important part in the drama of life," said Goliath, rubbing his hands with glee. "But then I'll examine it another time—when I am ready; and now, friend Wolverine, I am ready to follow you."

"Then let us strike for camp on the Black river. I want a little nap before we strike out for the Five Points to assist in organizing a grand hunt for the Unknown Marksman. I'm interested in that matter, Goliath, for I don't know what minute that bloodthirsty wretch may send a bullet through my head."

So saying, they turned and hurried away toward the river; and about midnight reached the camp, or bivouac occupied by Frank Ballard and Ed Matthews.

"Nattie lives, boys!" shouted Old Wolverine, as they approached the camp-fire by which the two young bee-hunters sat mourning the loss of their young friend, and talking over the new sorrow it would be to his mother.

"Wolverine," exclaimed Frank, rising to his feet, half in doubt as to the truth of the old hunter's words, "do you tell this for a fact?"

"It is true, boys," affirmed their guide, Goliath Strong; "I have seen him and talked with him."

Frank and Ed sprang up and sent their shots of joy through the woods upon the midnight stillness.

"That is the happiest news I ever heard," said Ed; "sit down, Goliath, and tell us where brave, kind, rollicking Nattie Darrell is."

The hunters seated themselves, when Goliath narrated Nattie's adventures, as told by himself, from the time they were thrown out of the boat into the river up to the time of his rescue in the forest glade from the Wolverines.

"It was a narrow escape for him," said Frank. "We were just saying that if he were dead, the news would kill his poor widowed mother."

"Speaking of his widowed mother," said Goliath Strong, "reminds me of a question I want to ask you, boys: how long have you known Nattie Darrell?"

"I have known him ever since a babe. We lived next-door neighbors to the Darrells," replied Frank Ballard, somewhat surprised by the interest manifested by Goliath in Nattie.

"What kind of people were the Darrells?" the big hunter continued.

"Very fine people; Mr. Darrell and his wife were highly respected."

"What was their financial condition—say, five or six years ago?"

"They were in good circumstances, financially. I think Mr. Darrell was worth about fifty thousand dollars at one time."

"At one time; then the widow is poor now?" "Yes; very poor."

"How did they lose their property?"

"Through some carelessness on the part of Mr. Darrell, and rascality on the part of others."

"Do you know the circumstances by which it was lost, Frank?" the hunter asked.

"Yes," responded Ballard; "in the first place, Mr. Darrell's health became rather delicate, and as he was unable to oversee the management of his large landed possessions, he concluded to sell them and place the money on interest with real estate security. And no sooner had he effected the sale than two men, Captain Randolph Spencer, of lumber region fame, and one James Trimble, called upon him to negotiate a loan of fifty thousand dollars. They offered a vast tract of timber land worth four times the amount as security, and so they had no trouble in making the loan. The mortgage and notes were drawn up and acknowledged by the village justice, and forty-five thousand dollars paid to Trimble & Spencer. Five thousand more was to be paid in one week. The next day Mr. Darrell was to go to D—, the county seat of O— county, to have the notes and mortgage placed upon record; but that night the papers all disappeared from a drawer in which Mr. Darrell had placed them. A burglar had got into the house and carried them off. A close search was made for the thief, and a reward offered for the return of the papers, but they came not. Mr. Darrell was now in a great strait; and, to add to his difficulty, the man who owed him a balance on his farm failed, and he had not a dollar left. He had lost all but the amount paid Spencer and Trimble, forty-five thousand dollars. As fifty thousand was the amount promised them, he was unable to make good the remaining five thousand. However, he called upon Messrs Spencer and Trimble and offered to make them a release to the loss and place it upon the record of the court, in consideration of which they were to execute a new mortgage to cover the forty-five thousand dollars already received. This Spencer and Trimble refused to do, unless he would pay the full amount promised; they knew he could not pay a dollar more than he had, and made this an excuse to cheat him out of the forty-five thousand dollars which they had already received."

"The infernal whelps!" exclaimed Old Wolverine, springing to his feet and cracking his fist in the palm of his hand. "I'd like to draw and quarter them both! I know Trimble, and I know Spencer."

"Well, did Darrell ever make any attempt to recover his money of Spencer and Trimble?" asked Goliath.

"Yes; a suit was begun in probate court, but before the sitting of the term Mr. Darrell died. The widow made no appearance in court, for she preferred keeping the few hundred dollars remaining for herself and boy to giving it to the lawyers; and so the suit was dismissed, and poor Mrs. Darrell and her boy, Nattie, were paupers. Neither Trimble nor Spencer have ever been the man to give her a dollar of the forty-five thousand justly due her."

"Rascals!" exclaimed Goliath Strong, rising to his feet, and pacing to and fro before the fire, his eyes flashing with some inward emotion. Presently he said:

"Frank, don't you think that money can be recovered yet?"

"If those notes and mortgages could be found, it would be no trouble; but my opinion is they are not in existence."

"You think they are not in existence, do you?" asked Strong, stopping short and fixing a strange look upon him.

"I think they are not," answered Frank, startled by the big hunter's actions.

"What reason have you for thinking so, Frank?" Strong continued.

"I don't know what reason I have for my opinion, more than—"

"Well, did it ever occur to your mind who were the thieves that stole those papers?"

"Suspicion was fixed upon Claude Turner; but nothing was ever proven against him."

"Did that moment of his feet struck against something. He turned, to behold the overboard boat, which had previously been sighted from the brig, about drifting past him."

With a quick, upward spring he clutched the keel; then he clambered on the boat and placed himself astride of it.

Hope now animated his breast. He firmly maintained his position, anxiously waiting for the storm to abate, when he thought he might be seen by the brig's people and be picked up.

Half an hour later the gale subsided. The sky was clear, the sun shone on the sparkling blue waves.

Robert uttered a cry of joy.

There he was, far away in the clear distance, the brig Heron.

He waved his kerchief as a signal, and soon saw the vessel veer round, heading toward him.

"Ay! ay! I am safe enough, now!" he exclaimed, joyously. "Although I had given myself up for lost, I shall see Louise and my child again! Thank God! thank God!"

Then it occurred to him that the late accident seemed almost to have been ordered by a wise Providence to show him the folly of mourning over the loss of a diamond while he possessed LIFE, STRENGTH AND HEALTH, which were of so much greater value.

"Yes!" he cried aloud. "I can now appreciate the value of LIFE, since I have come so near losing it! The joy of being saved has, I believe, entirely cured me of my grief for the diamond."

Chancing, just then, to glance at the water, alongside the overturned craft, an exclamation of surprise and horror escaped him.

He saw a human arm and hand projecting from beneath the boat's gunwale, under the surface of the sea.

Sliding off, he soon succeeded in turning the vessel right side up, when he discovered that it contained the body of a Malay sailor; lashed to the middle thwart with a strong rope.

The man, as was evident from his appearance, had not been dead a long time. He was probably alive when the squall struck him. For he had lashed himself to the thwart. But the boat had capsized, and he had perished ere he could clear himself from his lashings.

A livid scar upon the dusky face gave to it a horrid, peculiar look.

Robert knew at once that he had seen that countenance before, and, on his trying to recall where, he remembered that it was on the Calcutta quay, as he was hastening along through a crowd of seamen to get aboard the brig Heron, a few minutes before she cast loose to set sail.

The recollection of the face was all the more firmly stamped on his mind from the fact of the man's having jostled roughly against him as he passed.

"I think I understand how he came in this boat," muttered Robert; "he must have deserted some vessel to which he belonged—some craft which sailed a day or so after the Heron."

Entering the boat, after he had bailed it out with the bucket, which was lashed to the stern-sheets, the young man was soon after picked up by the brig.

With a wild cry of joy his wife fell on his breast, encircling his neck with her arms, while

What had become of it?

The young man, almost distracted, told his wife, Louise, of his loss.

"Are you sure it was in your pocket?" she inquired.

"Yes, Oh, Louise! We are now poor, indeed."

The young woman endeavored to console him.

"We have a few dollars left," she said. "Don't despair, Robert."

He sat down and endeavored to think how he had lost the treasure.

All at once he remembered that, while leaning over the bulwarks, he had heard something drop into the water. He had then thought it was only one of the loose pieces of copper sheathing on the rail, but now he felt convinced that it was the diamond.

He related his wife of this fact, adding that, of course, all hope of ever obtaining the valuable gem was gone—that it was at the bottom of the ocean.

The loss preyed upon his mind. He no longer noticed the merry prattling of his little child, Richard, a boy of three years, who was playing at his knee.

A week passed, and Robert was still gloomy and sad. All the efforts of his wife to cheer him proved unavailing.

On the morning of the eighth day after leaving port, a heavy squall pounced upon the brig.

The wind roared and shrieked in the rigging, and the craft, almost on her beam-ends, sped along under the shortened canvas, buzzing and humming, with her masts jerking as if about going by the board.

"Hallo! there is a boat ahead!" exclaimed the old captain to Robert, as the two stood on the deck, looking at the vessel in the distance. "It is overboard! I wonder if there was anybody in it!"

Through an occasional opening in the flying spray, the young man could also see the boat, about a mile off.

The white foam-drift soon hid the little vessel from sight.

Robert, however, mounted into the foretop, where he stood endeavoring to pierce the white mist with his keen gaze.

Suddenly the backstay to which he held parting with a loud snap, he was hurled like a shot over the rail to leeward into the angry sea.

"MAN OVERBOARD!" was shouted fore and aft.

"Ay, ay, now!" exclaimed the old captain, as he ran to the rail, and caught a glimpse of Robert's upturned face, which, the next moment, was lost to view in the flying particles of foam.

"The poor lad is gone! We will never see him again!"

Louise hearing the cries on deck looked through the companionway.

The captain saw the large, wild eyes, saw the white lips move, and knew that the young wife was asking for her husband, although her words could not be distinguished in that raging tempest.

"Ay, ma'am!" screamed the old sailor, in her ear. "It was your husband who fell overboard! He is lost!" may as well let you know the truth first as last!"

As he spoke tears rolled down his weather-beaten cheeks.

"Save him! save him!" shrieked Louise. "You must save him!"

Again she and the little child, Richard Weston, at her side, looked up at the old tar, stretching out his tiny hands and crying:

"Papa! papa! bring papa!"

"Alas! no boat could live in such a sea!" answered the skipper.

The distracted wife sprang on deck. Holding her boy by one hand, and with the other clinging to the rail, she peered through the driving foam-flakes, vainly looking for her husband.

Never could she forget the horror of that moment.

There was the brig, booming along before that howling tempest, further, every moment, from the spot where the unfortunate young man had fallen!

Although she could not see him, yet she could imagine his struggles among those mad waves, and almost faintly she could hear his despairing cries, vainly rising above the roar of wind and ocean.

Robert was a good swimmer.

The moment he rose to the surface, after his fall from aloft, he turned himself round, so as to face away from the flying, blinding masses of water which must otherwise have suffocated him.

For a few minutes he saw the brig, as she dashed on; then she was hidden from his sight by the careering spray and the scud and rack of the tempest.

Knowing no boat could be lowered in such a storm, he gave himself up for lost.

He thought of his wife and child, and a wild cry of agony escaped him.

At that moment his feet struck against something. He turned, to behold the overturned boat, which had previously been sighted from the brig, about drifting past him.

With a quick, upward spring he clutched the keel; then he clambered on the boat and placed himself astride of it.

Hope now animated his breast. He firmly maintained his position, anxiously waiting for the storm to abate, when he thought he might be seen by the brig's people and be picked up.

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He waved his kerchief as a signal, and soon saw the vessel veer round, heading toward him.

"Ay! ay! I am safe enough, now!" he exclaimed, joyously. "Although I had given myself up for lost, I shall see Louise and my child again! Thank God! thank God!"

little Richard danced about the tawain, clapping his hands and crowing with delight.

"We'll give the dead man decent burial," said the old captain, "whoever he is."

The body, upon which the sailors had been gazing with much curiosity, was hoisted on deck, and laid out to be sewed up in canvas for burial.

While this was being done, Robert related to the captain the fact of his having seen the Malay on the wharf at Calcutta.

"He jostled against me," continued the speaker, "and—"

He suddenly paused, uttering a glad shout of surprise, which was echoed by his wife, as something fell from an inside pocket of the dead man's jacket, while the sailors were taking off the garment.

It was a metallic box, and as it struck the deck, the lid flew open, when something smooth and glittering rolled out!

"MY LOST DIAMOND!" cried Robert, picking up the precious gem.

"Yes! yes! it is the diamond!" exclaimed Louise, clapping her hands.

"Hooray! hooray! hooray!" cheered the sailors, while deep joy was expressed in the captain's eyes.

All the men had heard of their passenger's loss, and the finding of the treasure created among them the most intense excitement.

"Ay, ay," said the skipper. "It is now plain that the Malay picked your pocket when he jostled against you on the Calcutta wharf, and that what you heard drop in the water, when you leaned over your quarter-rail, was only a piece of the loosened copper sheathing, instead of the diamond, as you thought."

There is little to add.



## THE WHIRLWIND.

BY JAMES HUNGERFORD.

The whirlwind! the whirlwind! a monarch is he;  
And he sways a wide region—the land and the sea.  
And who is so dauntless that bends not in fear  
When he passes along in his mighty career?

When the sky has a hazy and slumberous air,  
Trust not to the calm, for the whirlwind is there;  
He is gathering his powers, ere he marshals them  
For his journey of storm over ocean and earth.

The soft winds, that nourish the blossoms and flowers,  
Flee away from the forests, the fields and the bow-  
ers;

To their caverns of coolness in terror they hie,  
For they know the king of the tempest is nigh.

He comes on his chariot—the pyramid-cloud;  
And the voice of his coming is hoarse and loud;  
For he vaunteth his strength, and he shouts, in his  
glee,

That no spirit of storm is so mighty as he.

Who bend not before him, where'er he may go,  
With a sweep of his right hand he levels them low;  
For an absolute monarch is he, and his path,  
Like the path of a despot, is ruin and wrath.

Then he hurries away where the wide waters sweep,  
And sinks the stout ship in the fathomless deep;  
And his broad pinions lash the wild billows again,  
Till they leap in their terror and howl in their pain.

Yet the monarch of winds, in his lordliest hour,  
Still spareth the low. 'Tis brave not his power;  
Scarce stirs he the stream that meanders the dell,  
And the small bark that rides on its fairy-like swell.

Far away from the breath of his meteor-gale,  
The flower and the shrub are safe in the vale;  
And the cot, that stands low 'neath the sheltering  
hill,

Is safe when the tempest is working its will.

The whirlwind! the whirlwind! a monarch is he;  
And he sways a wide region—the land and the sea;  
And who is so dauntless that bends not in fear  
When he passes along in his mighty career?

## A Bachelor's Advice.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"Oh, dear! I do wonder what he will say  
when he reads my letter? I am afraid to send  
it, after all; but, if I don't, what will I do?"

Edith Trevor's blue eyes were misty with  
something very like tears, although she would  
have denied to herself that her brave little  
heart was really very dependent.

She was a little creature, delicate and fair  
as a hot-house blossom, with soft, sweet blue  
eyes the very shade of violet petals, and with  
a complexion pale as alabaster, that made al-  
most a startling contrast to her dark blue-  
black hair.

She was only nineteen—and a widow, and  
so shyly adapted to make her way alone through  
the world, both from her delicate, dainty re-  
serve and helplessness, that was not at all com-  
mensurate with her determination to do the  
best she could, and from the sharp, sudden  
change from being the petted darling of her  
husband to her position of loneliness and al-  
most utter friendlessness.

She was an orphan, and Harry Trevor mar-  
ried her, living with an aunt who had since  
died, and her husband had taken her to a home  
among strangers, hundreds of miles from any  
one she knew or even had ever heard of. Not  
that she had at all cared—Harry had been so  
entirely her all-in-all that it never mattered  
where she was so long as she was with him;  
but now, in her loneliness and self-dependence,  
she realized keenly what it was to be so iso-  
lated.

Of course she had acquaintances, which had  
been very pleasantly made during the few  
months of her married life, but they were not  
the sort of people to whom she could go for ad-  
vice or practical assistance; and at the first,  
when her wild, numbing grief for her lost love  
completely paralyzed her, they were kind and  
attentive. Beyond that poor little Edith knew  
they would never trouble themselves.

Then, when Harry had been dead some five  
or six months, and the little store of funds that  
had been saved was nearly gone—and Edith,  
in using it, had only acted as foolishly as both  
she and Harry had done in trusting to luck for  
future rainy days—then she began to look  
about her for means of employment, and for  
several months had managed somehow to get along.

Then work such as she could do—fancy knit-  
ting and embroidery and pretty lace trifles—  
seemed in much less demand, and Edith dis-  
covered that she must find some less precarious  
means of earning her daily bread.

And then it was that she suddenly decided  
upon turning her house into a boarding-house—  
such a little house as it was, too—only  
capable of accommodating four or five guests,  
but even four or five—when she took into con-  
sideration the fact that the rent was paid for  
another quarter, (Edith often wondered how  
it had happened that Harry had paid it in ad-  
vance only a few days before his death)—  
even four or five well-accommodated, good  
paying boarders she knew would make her a  
living.

So, delicate, ignorant, ambitious little Edith  
made the venture, and hired a cook, and took  
the chambermaid's duties upon herself, and suc-  
ceeded in securing five boarders, and tried her  
best to get along.

But—she couldn't tell why—she didn't get  
along. Money certainly came in every Satur-  
day night, but bills also came in every Monday  
morning, and were invariably larger than the  
amount with which to pay them.

Gradually her indebtedness increased, one of  
her boarders married and left her, and another  
fell into the habit of letting his board-bill run  
on, paying a little on account occasionally,  
and poor little Edith grew worn and thin and  
almost distracted.

Then it was, that, one day rummaging among  
some of Harry's papers, she came across a let-  
ter from a distant cousin of his—Mr. John Ran-  
som—and it came to her like an inspiration to  
appeal to this friend of Harry's for advice.

So she wrote her letter—a pitiful, half-de-  
spairing, half-desperate sort of letter—and then,  
when it was sealed and addressed and stamped,  
she—oh! so womanlike!—almost determined  
not to mail it at all.

But with many a misgiving, and many a  
fluctuation between hope and fear, she finally  
dropped it in the letter-box on the corner lamp-  
post, with a little gasp when she realized it was  
really gone from her.

And as she walked home—such a tiny, girlish  
looking creature, so graceful and so worried  
looking—she little imagined she had done that  
which was to alter all her future life.

A large, lofty dining-room, furnished in rich  
crimson maroon and walnut, and gilding and  
lace and damask curtains. There was an oval  
breakfast-table, spread with a full silver ser-  
vice, and gilt and white china, and glittering  
crystal over a warmly red and yellow-white  
tablecloth, that had napkins to match. There  
was broiled ham and delicious looking eggs,  
and rolls, and coffee, and fruit. There was a

graceful vase with fresh-cut flowers in it, and  
the bright sunshine, streaming in over all,  
making a pretty, cheery, homelike picture.

At the head of the table, behind the spirit  
coffee-urn, sat a straight, stern-faced lady, who  
had seen the sunny side of thirty, long ago,  
and who was devoting the latter years of her  
life to superintending her brother's house, and  
making a pleasant home for him, at least that  
was what Miss Althea Ransom herself said was  
her self-imposed mission.

Perhaps she thought because she always had  
the meals well cooked and on time, because  
there never went into Mr. Ransom's hands a  
shirt guilty of a missing button, because she  
never troubled him with verbatim reports of all  
the servants' misdoings—perhaps because of all  
these undeniably good things, Miss Althea con-  
scientiously believed she did make a happy,  
pleasant home for her brother.

But—well, Mr. Ransom certainly did not  
look at all like a miserable man as he sat com-  
fortably at the opposite end of the table, and  
he certainly did look like a very fine manly  
one, with his large, symmetrical person, his  
pleasant, good-humored, intelligent face, with  
his bright, cheery hazel eyes, luxuriant, wavy  
dark-brown hair, cut close to his head, his  
handsome mouth and teeth, his long, glossy  
brown side-whiskers.

Not a boyish, not even a young face, but a  
good, honest, more than ordinarily good-look-  
ing one, that did not belie his age—forty-three.

And to this gentleman Edith Trevor's letter  
had come, and was this minute lying open,  
and more than once read, beside his plate.

"You seem to have uncommonly interest-  
ing news this morning, John. If it's no  
secret—"

He interrupted her cheerfully:  
"Nothing of the sort. There, read it for  
yourself."

And Miss Althea's cold, hard eyes read the  
daintily-written little letter Edith's trembling  
hands had penned.

"I should say she had an abundance of what  
people call 'cheek,' John. The idea of Harry  
Trevor's widow taking upon herself the bold-  
ness of writing to you a single man! What  
does she want, anyhow?"

Mr. Ransom, buttered a warm roll while he  
answered:

"Her letter is rather inexplicit, I must say.  
I suppose she is in trouble, somehow, and  
simply applies to an old friend of her husband  
for assistance and advice."

A dark frown corrugated the lady's brow.

"It's very romantic, indeed; coming to you  
for advice, who knows so much about the trials  
of married life, or the vicissitudes of widow-  
hood! Ten to one she is up to some artful  
dodge, John. I'll take her address, and run  
down and see her. If she's a strong, energetic  
woman, not above earning an honest living, I  
suppose I might bring her back to take the up-  
stairs girl's place, who leaves when her month  
is up."

And although Mr. Ransom only wondered  
what more she knew of the "trials of mar-  
ried life" than he, he nevertheless indorsed her  
determination that she should personally see  
in what respect she could be of use to Harry  
Trevor's widow.

So it came about that by the close of the  
week Miss Althea Ransom was the occupant  
of one of Mrs. Trevor's rooms, lately vacated  
by a lodger, for some reason or other.

And an experience it was to her, herself a  
model manager and housekeeper, who could  
cook anything, from a cup of coffee to a din-  
ner of half a dozen courses for a score of peo-  
ple; and poor distracted little Edith, trying  
her best to be in a half-dozen places at once,  
consequently never in the right one at the right  
time—never knowing her severe-faced, prim-  
mannered new-comer was a sort of spy of the  
land—was waiting and hoping and despairing  
for the letter from her husband's friend.

Then, the very day after Miss Althea had  
taken her things and departed for home,  
Edith's cook mutinied, and the result was  
Edith was left with her remaining two board-  
ers, and only a stupid little German girl to  
run the establishment.

It was at the very worst then, Edith  
thought; nothing more could happen; only  
she did not know the report Miss Althea had  
carried home, nor the result of that report.  
Mr. Ransom had been reading the evening  
paper when Miss Althea unfolded her budget  
of news.

"It is just as I expected, and yet not as I  
expected, John. She is a shiftless little in-  
dignant, only fit to be dressed up in ribbons  
and laces and set on a revolving pedestal in a  
dressmaker's window."

The tone of her voice was inexpressible.  
Mr. Ransom looked up, interestedly.

"Then she is pretty?"

"Pretty! oh, yes. She is pretty enough—  
delicate looking and small as a girl of thirteen,  
with blue eyes and black hair—if you admire  
that style, which I don't."

"She must be very pretty—very pretty, and  
petite women are always graceful. She'll  
marry again, I dare say."

"And the more fool he who saddles himself  
with such a helpless little thing—helpless and  
ignorant and sickly, I dare say. All the same,  
it is kind of a pity she has to do for herself—  
and yet, people can't be forever helping every-  
body they see needing it."

And Miss Althea opened her "Madame"  
and settled down to her evening's recreation  
of reading in a decided sort of way that in-  
timated she had settled in her own mind that as  
Edith Trevor had begun so she should continue  
—doing for herself the best she could.

But Mr. Ransom dissipated any such deci-  
sion.

"I am interested in spite of myself, Althea.  
I remember Trevor's writing me about her. I  
know he adored her, and Trevor's taste was  
good. I think I'll find her when I go down to  
the city to-morrow."

Miss Althea's lips and nose nearly met in an  
unmistakable sneer.

"Don't be a fool, John! She'll wheedle and  
coax you into paying her bills or her note, like  
enough—or I shouldn't be surprised to learn  
when you come home you have agreed to start  
her in business again."

Mr. Ransom smiled.

"Like as not she'll do both, Althea. What  
if she should?"

And Miss Althea found it impossible to be-  
come interested in Benedict's "Madame"  
again, that night, or the next day either, for  
that matter, because a telegram had come to-  
ward night, announcing that her brother  
would not return at once, but would advise her  
when to expect him.

The days wore on, and it was not until a  
fortnight from the time Mr. Ransom had gone  
that Miss Althea was apprised of his expected  
return—at eight in the evening, the telegram  
curtly said.

So Miss Althea bustled around and ordered  
a sumptuous dinner, with her brother's fa-  
vorite stuffed veal and fried eggplant, and  
orange pudding for dessert.

"For he'll be so thoroughly starved and

sickened with eating the execrable messes in  
that child's house that a good meal will be a  
godsend. Poor boy! I expect he will come  
back tired and worn out with his trip, and—  
disgusted with Edith's babyish ways."

At just ten minutes after eight when she  
heard carriage-wheels at the door, and it was  
just one minute after that she greeted her  
brother John in the hall.

"My dear boy! It is so good to see you  
again."

And Mr. Ransom kissed her, and returned  
her salutation.

"Yes. I'm glad to be home again. Come,  
my darling, and let my sister kiss you!"

And then, Miss Althea saw that her brother  
John had not come home alone.

"I beg—your pardon—what did you say?"

She said it in awful tones that had not the  
least effect on the gentleman who had drawn a  
little gloved hand through his arm.

"This is Edith, Althea—my wife."

Edith gave a little pleading glance at Miss  
Althea's horror-stricken face.

"Your wife, John Ransom! Well, of all  
outrages—"

Mr. Ransom quietly interrupted:

"My wife, I said, Althea. My loved little  
wife whom I have brought to her own home as  
its mistress and sole queen. Please do not  
make me remind you of that fact again."

So it all came about—so naturally to two of  
them, so provokingly to Miss Althea, but who,  
in time, was won by her sister-in-law's sweet-  
ness and gentleness, and who bloomed into the  
very perfection of refined, happy womanhood  
in the atmosphere of love which surrounded  
her.

Nor did Edith ever regret she sent her let-  
ter.

## A Girl's Heart:

OR,

DR. TREMAINE'S WOOING.

BY RETT WINWOOD,

AUTHOR OF "THE WRONGED HEIRESS," ETC.

CHAPTER X.

A DREAD ALTERNATIVE.

MR. EDWARD DENT did not seem to rest  
well that night—or, rather, he did not rest at  
all.

After the lamps were lighted he haunted the  
parlors, wandering through them like some  
perpetrated spirit doomed to linger on the spot  
where its transgressions would continually  
present themselves in the most hideous as-  
pect.

He sought Mrs. Heathcliff for a brief inter-  
view, in the library, and when that was end-  
ed went back to his old promenade through the  
richly-furnished apartments.

Eleven o'clock found him smoking a cigar on  
the veranda. By this time the house was still.  
Nearly everybody had retired, for they kept  
early hours at Fairlawn.

Suddenly the hall door was softly opened,  
and a dark figure crept noiselessly toward the  
terrace steps. Mr. Dent quickly extinguished  
his cigar, and leaned further back in the  
shadow, fervently praying that the smell of  
the smoke might not betray his proximity.

A dark, sinister smile was on his lip, for he  
had recognized the figure at a glance.

"And so my dainty Rachel takes midnight  
rambles," he muttered. "It does not surprise  
me."

Then, with the ferocious eagerness of a pan-  
ther, he slid into the purple gloom of the roses,  
syringes and rhododendrons, and stealthily fol-  
lowed that softly-gliding figure.

Toward the lower end of the garden Rachel  
made her way, and Mr. Dent, stealing along  
in the shadows and perfumed gloom, never  
once lost sight of her.

At last she paused near a wicket. It was  
flung eagerly open, and a young man caught  
her in his arms, and covered her lips with  
kisses.

"My darling," he cried, "I am so glad you  
have come."

"Are you?" muttered Mr. Edward Dent,  
glaring ferociously upon the pair from his  
hiding-place. "And I'm glad you've come,  
my precious young rascal, for I have an ac-  
count to settle with you."

He made no attempt to approach any near-  
er, but seemed content to cover there and  
watch them. They talked for a long time,  
very earnestly. Rachel seemed to be pleading  
with her companion, but only an occasional  
word reached the ears of the watcher.

He heard enough, however, to know that  
Rachel feared for the young man's safety, and  
was urging him to leave the neighborhood as  
quickly as possible.

At last the interview ended. There was a  
long embrace, a kiss, a choking down of sobs,  
and the pair parted.

Rachel crept feebly toward the house, all un-  
conscious of the eyes that were upon her—the  
footsteps that kept time to her own. She lift-  
ed the latch, and went slowly into the hall.

A dim light was burning there. She paused  
a moment, holding fast to the oaken balusters,  
so overcome that she could go no further.

And Miss Althea opened her "Madame"  
and settled down to her evening's recreation  
of reading in a decided sort of way that in-  
timated she had settled in her own mind that as  
Edith Trevor had begun so she should continue  
—doing for herself the best she could.

But Mr. Ransom dissipated any such deci-  
sion.

"I am interested in spite of myself, Althea.  
I remember Trevor's writing me about her. I  
know he adored her, and Trevor's taste was  
good. I think I'll find her when I go down to  
the city to-morrow."

Miss Althea's lips and nose nearly met in an  
unmistakable sneer.

"Don't be a fool, John! She'll wheedle and  
coax you into paying her bills or her note, like  
enough—or I shouldn't be surprised to learn  
when you come home you have agreed to start  
her in business again."

Mr. Ransom smiled.

"Like as not she'll do both, Althea. What  
if she should?"

And Miss Althea found it impossible to be-  
come interested in Benedict's "Madame"  
again, that night, or the next day either, for  
that matter, because a telegram had come to-  
ward night, announcing that her brother  
would not return at once, but would advise her  
when to expect him.

The days wore on, and it was not until a  
fortnight from the time Mr. Ransom had gone  
that Miss Althea was apprised of his expected  
return—at eight in the evening, the telegram  
curtly said.

So Miss Althea bustled around and ordered  
a sumptuous dinner, with her brother's fa-  
vorite stuffed veal and fried eggplant, and  
orange pudding for dessert.

"For he'll be so thoroughly starved and

sickened with eating the execrable messes in  
that child's house that a good meal will be a  
godsend. Poor boy! I expect he will come  
back tired and worn out with his trip, and—  
disgusted with Edith's babyish ways."

At just ten minutes after eight when she  
heard carriage-wheels at the door, and it was  
just one minute after that she greeted her  
brother John in the hall.

"My dear boy! It is so good to see you  
again."

And Mr. Ransom kissed her, and returned  
her salutation.

"Yes. I'm glad to be home again. Come,  
my darling, and let my sister kiss you!"

And then, Miss Althea saw that her brother  
John had not come home alone.

"I beg—your pardon—what did you say?"

She said it in awful tones that had not the  
least effect on the gentleman who had drawn a  
little gloved hand through his arm.

"I have come to no decision."

"You will not harm him? You dare not!"  
She seemed to forget her fear and aversion  
for a moment. Turning, she clung to his arm,  
and looked up eagerly into his cruel face.

His arm slid about her waist in a half-ca-  
ress.

"Rachel," he cried, thickly, "how beautiful  
you are! But you were never more fascinat-  
ing than you are to-night."

She flung off his arm, and shrunk away  
from him, moaning piteously.

"Don't trifle with me. I am not strong. I  
cannot bear it. For God's sake have a little  
mercy."

The appeal did not touch him. He stood  
staring at her with gloating eyes. She was in  
his toils, this sweet, marvelously-beautiful  
young girl. He knew the metal of which she  
was made—nothing short of a miracle could  
save her from him.

"You asked me just now what I was going  
to do," he said, after a pause. "That will de-  
pend wholly upon yourself."

"Upon me?"

"Yes. Listen. I am not an impressive  
man, in general. But your beauty went  
straight to my heart. I loved you the first  
time I saw you. I am not handsome and cul-  
tured like Dr. Tremaine. But a heart quite  
as passionate as his throbs in my bosom."

He paused a moment, gave her a swift  
glance, and then went on:

"That heart is filled with your image, Ra-  
chel. I have longed to tell you so before, but  
you never gave me the opportunity. You  
would not see me to-day. You have been very  
cruel."

He seemed to wait for a reply of some sort.

The girl turned her white, haggard face away  
from him. She reeled giddily, no longer able  
to support herself.

He brought a chair, seated her in it, and  
then resumed:

"I love you too well to give you up—bet-  
ter than I had deemed it possible to love any  
woman. You have come between me and am-  
bition—duty. But I fling them both to the  
winds, and cling only to you. I would make  
any sacrifice for your sake—any save to give  
you up. Test me."

A strong, deep shudder was her only answer.  
She must have known what he meant, but  
would not speak.

"That man you met in the grounds, just  
now," he said, breaking the silence that fell.  
"Has he told you what I know of him?"

She nodded her head.

"He told me to-night. I did not know be-  
fore."

"You knew he was in trouble of some  
sort?"

"I did."

She seemed to be choking with suppressed  
sobs for a moment. Growing calmer, at last,  
she added:

"He has no secrets from me—the brave,  
true fellow. But I did not know until to-  
night that you were mixed up in his af-  
fairs."

"Humph! A crafty smile curled his thin  
lip. 'I think we can now arrive at an under-  
standing, Miss Rachel. That man is in my  
power, and you know it. I could place him  
within the walls of a prison before to-morrow's  
sun shall set.'

"But you will not," she cried, falling on her  
knees at his feet. "For God's sake promise  
me you will not."

"His fate is in your hands,"

"In mine? Then he shall live—live!"

Her voice arose to a hysterical shriek. She  
burst into a passionate flood of tears, that  
shook her whole body.

"What would you do for him?" demanded  
Mr. Dent's cold voice.

"I would give my own life for his."

"It is not a life I ask. You can save him in  
one way—only one."

To her wild stare he replied with a wicked  
laugh.

"You do not understand me, Rachel. Let  
me speak more plainly. If you wish to save  
that man, you must become my wife."

"Never!" she cried, reeling in her chair, as  
if from a blow.

"Very well," he replied, with the same fixed  
smile. "His blood be upon your head!"

"You can save him, and you

"Rachel," she cried out sharply, "I want you."

She shot Colonel Heathcliff a swift glance in passing, then caught the girl's hand, and dragged her into the hall outside the door.

"What is this I hear?" she then demanded, imperiously. "Tell me at once, child. Have you pledged yourself to this stranger, to this wretch who calls himself Edward Dent?"

Rachel bent her head, and answered: "I have."

Madame gave a sharp little cry. It was full of anger and fury.

"This is Pauline's work! She has some object to accomplish. She is forcing you to wed that man."

"No," answered Rachel, "Mrs. Heathcliff has nothing to do with it. I have made my own choice."

"Fangh!" looking at her with a black, witch-like stare. "Do you think to deceive me? Would you make me believe you love that villain?"

"I must marry him."

"Fool!" shrieked madame, shaking her fist wildly in the air.

She suddenly grew calm again. Her stern face softened. Perhaps the anguish expressed in the abject attitude and burning eyes of the young girl had touched her heart. At any rate she stooped suddenly and kissed her cheek.

"My child," she said, in a low voice, looking all around, "I have been a stern, hard guardian. You have never found me sympathetic or generous. You have been wronged and ill-used from first to last. But, as God hears me, I have loved you through it all, and I love you now."

She gasped, hesitated. Rachel drew back a little, staring hard at her. She was startled. She saw a change in Madame Gale, but knew not what to make of it. For the moment it brought no relief—only increased her distress.

"I've made up my mind to stand by you," madame went on, in that same odd way, and with that same odd expression upon her features. "It was a struggle, but I cannot see you suffer. Whoever seeks to harm you hereafter will have to answer to me."

## CHAPTER XII.

TRYING TO SEE IN THE DARK. MADAME'S lips closed together sharply. She stood quite silent, eying Rachel with a meaningful look that had something of real kindness behind it.

The girl's face flushed suddenly. In spite of the misery she was in, hope warmed into new life in her bosom—she scarcely knew why.

"Oh," she cried, "I am sure you can help me if anybody can. You will—promise me you will!"

"Bahl! Have I not promised already?" She knitted her brows, and stood rubbing her yellow hands together. She was evidently at a loss.

"Why do you think I can help you?" she demanded, presently.

"Because—because—"

"Because what, you silly child?"

Rachel gathered courage, and finally went on, incoherently.

"It has just occurred to me! Perhaps I cannot make you comprehend. But there is some mystery. You, Madame Gale, are mixed up in it. So is Mrs. Heathcliff. You both know something of me which you are unwilling to tell."

Madame laughed shrilly, and said: "Go on."

"There is some secret understanding between Mrs. Heathcliff and Mr. Dent. Don't stare and shake your head; I know there is. You may be mixed up in that mystery, too. I don't know—things are terribly jangled. But if you are, I am sure you can set everything right, somehow, so that I will not be compelled to marry that dreadful man."

She paused to take breath. Her eager eyes were upon madame's face. She seemed to be trying to read her through and through.

"It's all a mistake," said madame, dryly. "I don't know anything about Mr. Dent. You're a cunning little thing, but this time you have made a mistake. You have, indeed."

Rachel clasped her fingers over her temples. "Then I am lost!" she moaned, leaning heavily against the wall.

Madame stood scowling and thinking. At last she moved a little and laid her great hand upon the back of Rachel.

"Tell me why you are going to marry Mr. Dent," she said.

The girl writhed, hesitated, and glanced fearfully up and down the passage. Finally she whispered a few words close to madame's ear.

They must have been startling words, for the witch-like old woman recoiled sharply.

"Just Heaven!" she cried, "is he here?"

"Hush!" whispered Rachel, warningly. "You will not betray him! Oh, I know you dare not."

"No, I shall not betray him."

There followed a brief silence. Madame broke it.

"And so it is to save him that you have promised to marry Mr. Dent?"

"Yes."

"Humph!" she grunted, with a grimace. "What a precious fool you are! I never dreamed of that."

Then she added:

"I begin to understand this Mr. Dent a little better. Pauline is a hypocrite. She should have told me; but she did not. Bahl! it is no longer necessary."

Rachel tried to speak, but could not. She was quivering all over. So much—so very much—depended upon that interview.

"Have you no more to say to me?" demanded madame, after a pause.

She gasped four words in reply: "No, no, no, no—save me!"

Madame knitted her brows again, frowning a little, and finally made answer:

"I don't know. I'm sorry he—you know whom I mean—is mixed up in this affair. But you would not desert him even to save yourself—I know without that you would not."

Then, eying Rachel sternly all round, she demanded:

"Why has he not shown himself to me?"

"Perhaps he was afraid to do so."

"Humph!" grunted madame. "No matter. Now go, child. I will do what I can for you. And you must try to trust me more fully than you have done before."

Though strangely sick at heart, Rachel tried to nod assent, but her stubborn head scarcely moved at all.

Madame grinned, turned sharply, and swept rustling into the apartment where Colonel Heathcliff was sitting.

Rachel moved slowly down the passage. When she reached the main hall, everything seemed to blur before her eyes, of a sudden. Her limbs tottered, and there was a ringing in her ears. She pushed open the nearest door, and staggered to a seat.

It was the library she had entered. A fig-

ure rose up from the obscurity of the remote portion of the apartment. Rachel heard a quick, firm step, and struggled hard with the deathly lethargy that seemed to be stealing away her senses. She looked up.

Dr. Tremaine was coming toward her, almost as pallid and agitated as herself.

His sudden appearance was like a shock. It aroused her from the faintness and stupor that had beset her.

"What has happened?" he cried, pausing at her side, and speaking in a low, deep tone that thrilled her strangely.

"Nothing," she stammered.

"You are ill," he persisted.

"No, no. It was a sudden faintness. See, I am better now."

The color was coming back to her cheeks, the light to her eyes. The mere enchantment of his presence had wrought the change.

"Yes," he murmured, "you are growing more like yourself again."

He hesitated, with his eyes fixed eagerly upon her face. A torrent of words seemed to choke his utterance. Giving way to them at last, he cried out, sharply:

"Oh, Rachel, I cannot give you up. I cannot keep away from you! Something more powerful than my own will draws me to your side. I know it is wrong and wicked. I know I am weak, foolish, beside myself! But you will bear with me, and let my great love plead my excuse?"

Rachel turned away her face at those burning words, pained, startled, grieved.

"Oh, hush, hush!" she moaned.

"Do I only add to the burden you carry?" he asked, reproachfully. "It is hard—it is very hard. I would die for you."

"Hush!" she whispered again, in a heart-broken voice.

"Will you not listen? God help me! Do you know I gathered hope from your manner when last we met? I thought my fears might all have been groundless, and you were free to return my love."

She clasped her hands and a slight moan escaped her lips.

"Was I wrong?" he pleaded, passionately.

"I must know. Was I wrong in thinking you might learn to love me?"

"I cannot be your wife," she answered.

He caught his breath sharply. An expression of blank dismay settled upon his face.

"Forgive me," he said.

The hopeless resignation of his tone went straight to her heart. She threw out her hands feebly.

"Don't misunderstand me," she cried.

"There is a barrier between us that neither you nor I can surmount. God be merciful to us both!"

He caught her hand, drew it to his lips and covered it with impetuous kisses.

"If that barrier is not love for another, I will surmount it," he exclaimed, eyes and face all aflame.

Rachel sighed drearily.

"It is my promise to another, Dr. Tremaine."

He started, growing pale again. He thought of that night in the garden, when he had seen her clasped close to another man's heart. What did it all mean? What was this mystery? Was she playing with him—leading him on while her affections were bound up in another?

"A promise?" he repeated, hoarsely. "Have you promised to wed another?"

She bowed her head.

"But you do not love him? I have a right to know. You do not love him?"

"What matters it?" she answered, hiding her white, haggard face. "Nothing but death can release me from my vow. Go, go! You are driving me mad. I cannot endure this scene."

The sharp anguish of this appeal would not let him linger. He dropped a hot kiss upon her bowed head, then turned and went slowly from the room.

Like one in a dream he staggered out into the sunshine and the open air. A white dress came fluttering toward him, gliding through the shrubbery.

It was Grace Atherton. She gained his side, and her hand fell gently as a snowflake upon his arm. Her eyes were full of soft and subtle pity.

"Going away?" she cried, reproachfully.

"I am so sorry I did not know you were here. Did you find anybody to entertain you?"

"Miss Clyde," he answered.

She gave a perceptible start.

"And so you saw Rachel? I am glad of that. Of course she told you the news?"

"What news?"

Grace forced a laugh, and returned, in a careless tone:

"She is to marry Mr. Dent."

"Mr. Dent?"

Dr. Tremaine recoiled as if he had been struck. His face grew ghastly.

"I don't think I understand you," he said, harshly.

"You did. I said Rachel was going to marry Mr. Dent."

"Impossible!" He gasped out the word, while his brow grew dark and lowering.

"It is too true," murmured Grace. "I would not have believed it. But she makes no secret of her intentions. I can't understand it."

No more could Dr. Tremaine. He stood quite still, growing hot and cold by turns. He felt angry, hurt, humiliated.

He had only thought of the mysterious stranger. It had never once occurred to him that it was Mr. Dent to whom her word was pledged.

Why was it? Why had she given herself up to the man she feared and loathed?

"It is very odd," he said, with a ghastly smile.

"Very. He is so old, so coarse, so vulgar, so unscrupulous in every way. It must be a powerful motive that induced her to betroth herself to him."

She gave him a swift glance and went on:

"I have not forgotten the discovery we made in the garden that night. I was sure the man Rachel met then was her lover. I think so still. But circumstances have compelled her to give him up, and accept Mr. Dent."

"Don'tless you are right."

The words fell slowly from his lips. He was smiling his best. But it was a strange, forced smile in which pain, mortification and scorn were all mingled.

"I hope she will be happy," said Grace, sweetly. "But I do not see how that is possible."

Her soft glance, so full of magnetism and subtle sympathy was upon Dr. Tremaine's face. Her scented breath fanned his cheek. She stood beside him, bright, beautiful, gentle, womanly, all—to outward seeming—that man could ask to make the sum of earthly happiness.

Her graceful figure was slightly inclined toward him. Was it imagination—or did her lovely face express an emotion stronger and deeper than sympathy?

Man-like, he accepted the incense so cunningly off-red. He caught her hand almost fiercely to his lips and cried out:

"God bless you! You, at least, are good and true!"

Then he swung swiftly on his heel and strode away. Grace stood watching him, her cheeks dyed with blushes and her heart throbbing fiercely.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 378.)

## COME HOME

BY ELIEN LEZARD.

My own dear wife, I write to you To tell you what an awful stew Things have got into since you left— Was man before or so bereft? At first I thought that I could do The managing as well as you, But how I missed it you will see When you return. Ah, wretched me! The very day you took the train Your aunt came down with little Jane, And a more lovely little mite Has never lived to cry all night.

Shy, bless your soul, she was so spry She stayed awake all night to cry, And I don't think I missed a note That issued from her little throat.

I know that I am growing thin, And old and haggard by this din, And slowly sinking all the while, But I must bear it with a smile.

Our neighbors have a friendly way Of calling almost every day To see "dear aunt," and gather flowers, And pass away the evening's hours, And bring their children one and all Who keep up a continual brawl.

New something else has happened, dear: Our Eddie caught the mumps somewhere, And every time he takes his meals He utters loud, terrific squeals.

I've sure the reason for it, too; Oh, what on earth am I to do! And now, dear Anne, come home quick, Before I too am taken sick.

## The Cretan Rover;

OR,

### ZULEIKAH, THE BEAUTIFUL

A Romance of the Crescent and the Cross.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM.

AUTHOR OF "WITHOUT A HEART," "THE FLYING YANKEE," ETC., ETC.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

A DASTARD CAREER.

AFTER A MOMENT'S silence, Paul Malvern continued his story, not excepting Al Sirat Pasha, had listened with breathless interest, for he spoke in the Greek tongue.

"When last at Constantinople I wrote once more to my sister, begging that I might hear from her, for I knew nothing of what had happened at home—not even of her marriage to Archer Trevillian."

"The last batch of dispatches, received through Greece, brought me a number of letters from friends—who had seen my name mentioned as a resident in Bey, for you know the English papers and the New York Herald have been most complimentary over any services that I may have rendered poor Crete."

"One of those letters I will give you the contents of, for it is nearly similar to the news contained in the others."

"It told me that I was no longer considered intentionally guilty of having slain my rival, on that memorable night, for strange disclosures had recently been made, and my lawyer, the latter was from my father's legal adviser, had endeavored to find my whereabouts, although I was reported dead—a notice to that effect having been copied from an Athens journal—it stating that I was killed by the hand of a robber."

"I was advertised for, and then discovered through my services in Crete having been mentioned by newspaper correspondents."

"Of the disclosures made to me, I was informed of my sister's marriage to Archer Trevillian, and I remembered at just that date my remittance from home stopped."

"On their wedding tour the couple had visited Europe, and my sister had stated on her return that they had remained two days in Athens, after traveling for months over Eastern lands."

"The time of their stay in Athens, and the time of my attempted assassination were identical; need I say more on this point?"

"When my death was believed, my share of the fortune left by my parents, was given over to the sister, and Archer Trevillian then became master over all."

"So great was his influence over his wife, that she made her will, giving her husband all her property, in case of her death, for she was childless."

"At length my sister died suddenly—in fact, under such suspicious circumstances, that it turned attention upon Archer Trevillian as her murderer."

"Finding he was suspected he fled from the country, carrying with him a large sum of money he had in his keeping."

"A post-mortem examination revealed the fact that my sister had died from poison, and a druggist stated he had sold poison to Archer Trevillian, and the American could not withhold his admiration of a man who could so fearlessly face his fate."

Turning to Julian Delos the two conversed together for a few moments in a low tone, and then the young Cretan said calmly:

"The hour of your execution is at hand, pasha: have you ought to make known ere you die?"

"No, I have always lived prepared for death. Should it ever be asked how died Al Sirat Pasha, say that he died as he lived—fearlessly."

"I am ready," and the Turk calmly folded his chained arms upon his heart, and stood silently awaiting.

"And you, sir? have you ought to say?" and Julian turned toward Archer Trevillian.

"Merv! oh, merv! I am not fit to die! Let me live that I may repent!" groaned the cowering man.

"No mercy need you expect. Signor Taros, is all in readiness for the execution?"

"Yes, signor; the guard is here."

"It is well. Pasha, you are an intrepid man, and you shall not die in irons. Signor Stellos, remove those manacles from the wrists of his lordship."

The lieutenant quickly obeyed, and then Taros led the man to the spot where they were to stand—a raised scaffold upon the forecave of the yacht.

Al Sirat Pasha mounted the rude platform with calm dignity, and faced his executioners with intrepid mien, his order-bespangled breast sparkling in the rays of the moon.

Archer Trevillian was added upon the dais, his tottering limbs scarcely able to support him, his quivering, athen lips muttering prayers to that Savior whom he had renounced for the Allah of the Mahomedan.

As they stood thus, a white-robed form glided from the cabin companionway. It was Alfarida, who, stealing into the shadow of the mainmast, stood silently, almost greedily, watching the fall form of Al Sirat Pasha.

With a wave of his hand Julian Delos motioned to the guard to be in readiness; but, as they shouldered arms, the form of Archer Trevillian sunk heavily upon the platform.

Instantly Taros sprang forward to raise him up—believing he had swooned; but he started back, the renegade American was dead! Fear had killed him!

A scornful smile swept over the face of the Turk, and he motioned his hand to the guard.

tracked me to Europe to assassinate her brother. "You know now, my friends, the story of my life and that of Archer Trevillian. Does he need death?"

There was a cry from every lip—seamen and all:

"He does!"

And even Al Sirat shrunk from him. The pasha was a cruel soldier, heartless as regarded women, but his heart was not as black, Turk that he was, as that of the renegade American.

"He deserves death, and he shall die. Signor Taros, prepare for the execution of these two men," and Julian Delos led Kaloolah and Zuleikah into the cabin.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE SECRET OF THE SIGNET RING.

SLOWLY the moon, on its wane, arose above the sea, and its light fell full upon the face of those who stood upon the yacht's deck.

Calm, emotionless was the face of Al Sirat Pasha. He was to die, and his faith would not let him bemoan his fate.

He had shrugged his shoulders—muttered *Inshallah!* and with the calmness of a fatalist, resigned himself to indifference.

"What is to be, will be—so be it," he murmured, contentedly, and then turned to an apparent enjoyment of the moonlit sea, the silver-gilded waters that danced by the yacht.

Archer Trevillian was different. He had cast aside his creed for that of the Mahomedan, but it did not give him that calm indifference to death felt by the Turk, and covering, trembling, pallid as a corpse, he leant over the bulwarks, his eyes peering down into the dark waters, as though he would see how deep his body would sink when its soul he taken its flight.

In listless attitudes the seamen stood about the deck, ten of them leaning upon carbines, for they had been detailed as executioners.

Presently two forms came on deck—Paul Malvern and Julian Delos.

Their faces were sad, yet stern, and very white, their words low and earnest.

"Signor, in the early part of the Cretan struggle, you appeared before me, wearing the secret signet ring of the sultan?" and Al Sirat Pasha turned to Paul, who replied:

"Yes, I wear it yet," and he held forth his finger, and the seal glittered in the moonlight.

"When I learned afterward that you and Delos Bey, the Cretan conspirator, had taken sides against his majesty, I believed that you had both deceived his trust in you. Am I wrong?"

"No, pasha. His majesty never placed a trust in me," replied Paul.

"Can I ask, then, how you obtained that signet?"

"I will tell you with pleasure. "Once, when traveling through the mountains of Servia, near the village of Izverlik, I rescued from death a Turkish traveler—as I then believed, a merchant."

"He was a very young and handsome man, elegantly attired, and was traveling on horseback with two followers, when they were attacked by a band of Servian bandits, and ere they could offer resistance, the three were prisoners."

"The two servants, as I supposed them to be, were then cruelly put to death, and the bandits were preparing to rob the Turkish gentleman, and then to take his life, as they had done with his followers, when I rode upon the scene, unperceived by the party."

"I had with me my pet revolvers, and drawing one in each hand, I charged into their midst and rescued the Turk, who, mounting his steed, quickly dashed off by my side, and thus escaped the fate of his companions."

"That night we rested at the village of Izverlik, and in the morning the host of the khan where we stopped brought me a package, saying that my friend had departed and left that with him for me."

"I opened it, and beheld this ring, and a scrap of paper containing these words:

"Mamoud."

"The ring I never parted with, and though in great distress in Constantinople, it never occurred to me to seek the one who gave it to me."

"Do you know who Mamoud is?" asked Al Sirat Pasha.

"I do not. Doubtless some noble, as he held the ring of the sultan."



## A MAY MORNING.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

I one my eyes; far in the east  
The streaks of light grow taller,  
The silver moon would hardly rate  
At ten cents on the dollar.  
The smoke from chimneys round about  
Arises white and curly,  
And I am vexed to death because  
The morn arose so early.

The roosters which my neighbor keeps  
For my accommodation  
Began to crow an hour ago,  
And startled all creation;  
The cook below she slammed the stove  
And banged the pans and dishes;  
To see her far in China is  
One of my fondest wishes.

The tinsmith just across the way  
Long since began his pounding,  
The blacksmith also went to work  
In manner most astounding,  
The cooper long before daylight  
Began to pound his barrels,  
And if I had him now there'd be  
One of the worst of quarrels.

My tailor called at six o'clock  
And rapped my door intensely,  
But I was very sound asleep,  
(Inside a horn, I remember)  
My neighbor's dogs at five o'clock  
Began to bark terrifically,  
And all the sleep I had on hand  
Laid out for the Pacific.

The boiler-makers set to work  
An hour ago like thunder;  
Now twenty men could make such fuss  
Is something of a wonder.  
The trombone in the room below  
Stopped short at twelve, precisely,  
And then I went to sleep at once,  
I did it very nicely.

The sun peeps from behind the roofs;  
This morn it gets up sooner,  
Of all the lights in this world  
I much prefer the lunar.  
What do I care for the birds' first songs  
And early roosters' carols?  
When by an early waking  
He's lost of sleep some barrels.

Alas, alas, my gentle sleep  
Is broken all piecemeal,  
Which can't be gined together now,  
And this my rage increases.  
What cares one for the birds' first songs  
And early roosters' carols?  
When by an early waking  
He's lost of sleep some barrels.

This getting up, it gets me down,  
I want more night and fewer days  
And little molestation.  
And there, to crown the whole affair,  
Which is so agreeably worn,  
The darkey hammers at my door,  
And says that breakfast's waiting!

## Schamyl,

## THE CAPTIVE PRINCE:

OR,

## The Cossack Envoy.

## A Story of Russian Life and Adventure.

BY LAUNCE POYNTZ,

AUTHOR OF "LANE AND LASSO," "THE SWORD-  
HUNTERS," "CAVALRY CUSTER," ETC.

II.

As the form of the Cossack orderly disappeared in the crowd, Ziska Hoffman glanced at the note in his hand. It bore no superscription whatever. There were only two folds to it, and it contained but a few words, but these were startling, although written in French.

"*Ne me saluez plus. Trop des espions. Gardez-vous.*"

French is the court language of Russia, and Ziska knew that the bill meant in English: "*Salute me no more. Too many spies. Take care.*"

As there was no address, so there was no signature to this singular missive, which Ziska crushed in his hand as soon as he had read it. He had not the slightest doubt as to whence it came, for the presence of the Cossack and the mention of the salute sufficiently proclaimed young Schamyl, but the brief warning set him to thinking. If there were too many spies, who knew but Ivanoff might be one? As the thought crossed him, Ivanoff spoke:

"Czar Peter was a grand man, Batushka. He found Russia a tribe and left it a nation. Who would think that this great city was a swamp two hundred years ago when he looks at these grand buildings all round us?"

"Yes," said the American, dryly, "Czar Peter was a great man. He gave you statues, civilization and secret police, Ivanoff. You ought to be specially grateful for the last."

The merchant started and looked round apprehensively.

"Hush, Batushka," he said, in a low tone; "we dare not joke about that. They may be rounders here. The very ishvoshtchik might be one, for all I know."

"Or yourself," said Ziska, sharply.

Ivan Ivanoff in an instant changed his whole tone and manner as if he were greatly stung.

"Well, American gentleman, if you think that, I am sorry I ever spoke to you. You have not been in Russia very long yet, and I thought that a friend who spoke your language might help you as a stranger. When you have been here a little while you will find out that Russia and the *Tchinovnik* (officials) are two—not one. No Russian loves a spy or likes to be called one. Good-by."

Then, before Ziska could say a word, the big man jumped over the side of the sledge, and in another moment was lost in the crowd on the sidewalk, leaving the journalist alone in the sledge.

The driver looked round for orders. Ziska was thrown on his own resources, but a newspaper correspondent is used to that.

He made shift with signs and English in a way that must have been probably to impress upon the driver turned out to be very quick of comprehension.

"*Poshol, ishvoshtchik, hotel de Russie—you understand—stop—stop here. Eh?*"

The ishvoshtchik nodded and grinned and answered in a polyglot of English, French and Russian, under the impression apparently that he would make things clear.

"*Oui, Batushka, oui—all right—poshol stoi—all right.*"

Then he whipped up his horses and away went the grand Orloff trotter at full stride, with his little Cossack brethren at a sharp gallop on each side, till they drew up at the door of the hotel, when Ziska got out and was about to enter. Then the ishvoshtchik began to talk and hold out his hand, and Ziska understood that he wanted his pay. But how much was the pay, and how was he to ask the driver? His Russian was exhausted, and the driver was pouring out a flood of soft Russian words to tell, unheeding the propriety of impressing upon the American nobleman the propriety of paying a handsome fee.

Ziska reflected a moment and pulled out a silver ruble.

"Is that enough?" he asked.

The driver looked at it scornfully and began to talk faster than ever. It was really more than his fare. Ziska pulled out another ruble. The driver talked harder than ever and began to gesticulate as if he were calling all men to witness the meanness of the American gentleman.

ing humility, and poured out a flood of unknown words, probably blessings. He was just about to take the money when a stern voice close by said something in Russian.

Ziska looked round and there stood a fierce-looking officer with a huge red mustache. He was muffled in furs to his chin, but the gold lace on his cap showed him to be a person of some military rank.

He addressed Ziska with great politeness in fair English:

"The driver cheat you, sir. One ruble enough. Give him no more."

"I'm sure I'm very much obliged to you," said Ziska, and he thought his trouble was over, as the ishvoshtchik slunk away without a word, evidently cowed by the presence of the officer.

The American was going into the house when, to his surprise, the tall officer stepped forward and linked his arm in his with a strange sort of familiarity.

"You will excuse, sure. I must request you to give me a word. You have passport?"

"Certainly," said Ziska, not without a slight quiver at the heart. "It is in my room in the hotel in my trunk. I do not carry it with me."

"Exactly, sure. It has been attended to. You will oblige me by coming a few steps with me."

"Of course not," said Ziska, a little angrily.

"Why should I go with you at all? I don't know you."

"Nevertheless, sure, you will go, or I must take you. I have a sledge here. General Dragonoffsky wishes to see you, I repeat."

Ziska pushed away his new acquaintance with a sudden jerk and leaped back. His hand entered his breast.

"Who the deuce is General Dragonoffsky? Stand off, sir. I don't know you."

The fierce-looking officer smiled, and stepped up to him quite fearlessly.

"Do not do it, sure. It will be bad. General Dragonoffsky wishes to see you, I repeat."

"But who is General Dragonoffsky?" asked Ziska, impatiently.

The officer shrugged his shoulders, compassionately.

"As if all the world did not know. He is the chief of the secret police, sure."

In a moment Ziska realized his danger in resisting further. He took his hand from his breast.

"I am ready," he said.

The officer gave a blast on a silver whistle, and up dashed a sledge, the counterpart of that of Peter Petrovitch. Ziska and his new acquaintance stepped in, and were soon skimming away down the Newsky Prospect, round a corner into the Katerinograd Outfront (Catherine street) and drew up at last in front of a large, gloomy building with two great-coated sentries at the door.

Ziska followed his conductor up-stairs, then down some corridors into a large room full of clerks in uniform, all apparently writing busily, till the big officer, who had removed his cap, tapped at a green baize door at the further end, and immediately entered, still with his arm linked in that of Ziska.

They saw a second room, as large as the first, and magnificently furnished, where a small officer, with a bald head and white mustache, sat at a desk writing. He looked up, and spoke in French:

"Captain Vassilitch, who have you there?"

"The Austrian spy, your excellency," said the big officer, promptly.

Ziska started, and burst out indignantly:

"I am not Austrian, and no spy, as you shall find out. I am an American, a man of letters, a writer. Send for my passport if you doubt it."

The little officer smiled blandly.

"Do not be angry, my friend. A mere formality. Give me your keys. Your trunk is here."

And he pointed out to Ziska, who stood dumbfounded with amazement, his own trunk, which he had left at the hotel in the morning, but which stood close to the chair of the general, who was none other than the chief of police.

Quite resignedly, Ziska handed out his keys. He saw it was no use to struggle against this noiseless but merciless machine of arbitrary power.

General Dragonoffsky calmly opened the trunk and began to search it.

"The passport is at the top," said Ziska, gruffly.

"So I see," said the general, quietly, and he began to turn over it in silence. Then he turned to Vassilitch:

"Read out the abstract of this case, captain."

Vassilitch pulled from his breast a folded paper, and began:

"Ziska Hoffman, calls himself American, suspected of being an Austro-Turkish spy. Came to St. Petersburg yesterday in company with one Alexis Gogol, a nihilist politician, suspected of entertaining designs against the czar's life. Was seen to salute the Emir Schamyl Schamylowitch, with a view to excite a mutiny in the Cossacks of the guard."

He folded up the paper, and proceeded:

"To which I have to add that the prisoner carries secret weapons, and resisted arrest."

General Dragonoffsky smiled, and waved his hand.

"You are a zealous officer, Captain Vassilitch. You can retire now. I wish to talk to this gentleman alone."

Vassilitch bowed low, and left the room, while the little general beckoned to Ziska.

"Sit down, monsieur, sit down. This is but a little warning to you of what you do. You may get into, if you do not conquer a foolish habit into which you have fallen. In Russia it is not safe to make friends of mujiks or merchants who have been abroad. You do not need to salute Circassian princes neither, especially in the present state of Europe."

Vassilitch is a good officer, but—I say it, now he is out—a great blockhead. It needs no great penetration to see that you are what your passport says, an American writer. You are free. At the same time, it is expected you will write good accounts of Russia to this journal, you correspond for. You understand. I should not wish you to be arrested a second time. You might have this trunk sent to the Hotel de Russie. It is a better place than the Hotel de Belle Vue. Take a servant. One will come this afternoon. You will do well to employ him. Good."

The little general touched a call-bell. Two huge grenadiers made their appearance through a side door. The general spoke a few words in Russian, and he looked Ziska's trunk, and handed him the key. One grenadier caught up the trunk, another pointed to the door, and said:

"*Poshol.*"

Ziska looked at the general, and the little officer was already buried in his writing, as if the American had been a thousand miles off. The correspondent shrugged his shoulders and left the room, following the grenadiers down a private staircase into a side street, where stood another sledge.

The trunk was put in; Ziska followed, and a servant in green livery, hitherto invisible, jumped on the box.

"Hotel de Russie," said this individual, to the driver, and away went the sledge.

Ziska Hoffman began to realize that he was still under police surveillance, surrounded with spies.

What was to come of it?

He had learned two things besides. One was that Ivanoff's real name was Gogol, and that he was a "nihilist," whatever that might be. The other was that Schamyl's Cossack orderly had cheated the whole Russian police, for they did not know anything of the note.

As the thought crossed his mind the sledge reached the hotel.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 380.)

A good sneeze will help a man wonderfully in pronouncing some of the Russian names. Try it on Kischenoff.

## The Krooman's Vengeance.

BY C. D. CLARK.

We were on the slave coast of Africa in the year '58, in the schooner *La Esmerelda*.

She had been a slaver in her time, but falling into other hands and under another captain, she began to trade along the coast in gold and ivory. The fact was that the English cruisers made it so hot for the slave trade that it didn't pay, and I reckon the boys were glad that we wasn't trading in "black ebony" any longer. I was, for one, and I reckon there wasn't a man aboard, from the captain down, who didn't have a share in it. It was in his heart that we didn't have to watch night and day, creep up into the rivers for a cargo, and sneak out at night with three hundred groaning wretches chained down in the hold.

I said there was one—the first mate, Sam Nelson. He had been a slaver since the day he came on board one of Da Sousa's ships as cabin-boy, until he cared no more for a darkey's feelings than he did for a deer's or buffalo's. He was a hard man, far and wide, with a face of iron and a heart of steel—not the man you or I would like to make an enemy of, by any means. Perfectly fearless, as far as that went, and ready to meet death like a man, if it came, but cruel and bloodthirsty if he had the best of it.

Just the man for a slaver, like a man that wouldn't hesitate when a cruiser pressed them hard, or the cholera got aboard in the Middle Passage, to toss the poor devils over the rail with the shackles on their feet, sooner than let the cruiser catch them with slaves aboard, or take their chances of cholera.

We chaps in the folk's didn't like him very well, but he was a good sailor, and knew how to handle a ship, and there wasn't a man aboard that knew better than he the ways of this coast, and how to get safely into the lagoons and rivers.

"I don't like this coast," he growled, as we ran into the bight of the great bay. "There's many a man here that would like to stick a knife into me, and I've got to take care."

"By my soul," said Mr. Lawton, "you're eh, Sam?" said our second mate, Mr. Lawton, with a light laugh.

"I reckon. I'll never forget, till I die, the girl that jumped overboard just about here. She was a Kroo, you understand, and I ought to have let her alone, but she was a likely-looking wench, and I knew we could take two thousand for her in Cuba. I'll never forget her husband's face as he saw the schooner go over the board with the girl on deck. The mad fool chased her into the surf, and she was a hundred yards into the light craft and sink it. Then, when the woman saw that there was no hope, she just broke from the men that held her and jumped into the sea. She had iron on her hands, and went down like a stone."

"I don't look at it that way. A cargo of ebony is got easier than ivory and gold-dust, and there is more money in it, take it all round. I don't mind the hundred men now on the deck, but I know it and I know it as I know New York harbor."

"Con the schooner, Sam?" ordered Captain Dallas. "Jump into the forechairs!"

The mate obeyed, and we sprung to the lines and braces. The surf was high before us, in one broken line and straight for the vessel, the water the schooner was headed. For a moment the spray flew high about us, and then the mate cried out:

"Mainsail haul!"

We tugged away on the lines and the mainsail came aft. Then as the schooner lay over, we saw the bare brown rocks right under her forefoot. But Sam Nelson knew his business, and at the right moment the head of *La Esmerelda* fell off, and in five minutes more we were running along inside the surf line and let go the anchor in six fathoms of water. The chain had hardly stopped rattling, when out of the river, half a mile away, shot a dozen Kroo boats, coming down at a speed which beat anything I had ever seen. And in less than half an hour the active fellows were clambering aboard, clamoring for grog, and eager to be of service.

"Break out a keg of rum and give them a drink all round, Sam," said Captain Dallas. "Let's put them in good humor."

The order was obeyed, but all the time Sam Nelson was growling out that the captain ought to clap the whole gang into the run and take French leave. If we had wanted a cargo of that kind, I don't know where we could have got a better lot than the hundred men now on deck, but our captain wasn't that kind of a man, and the natives already understood that he was after ivory, not slaves, and the smart fellows saw at a glance that they had nothing to fear from him. Then there arose a cry among them:

"The king comes!"

We looked toward the river, and saw a boat which had been a ship's long boat, pulled by eight rowers in fanciful garb, shooting out of the mouth of the river. In a streamer, mounted on a deck, sat a king, a tall, brown man of majestic appearance, "every inch a king."

"Is that your king?" demanded Captain Dallas, speaking to an old Kroo who knew a little English.

"Dat our king!" answered the Kroo. "Dat Muchacha."

Captain Dallas stepped to the rail, the side lines were manned, and as the king's boat shot up to the side he saw the king nodding to him. "I've seen people of all nations, and I know a man when I see him, and in all my time I never saw a more perfect specimen of a man than Muchacha. He was over six feet in height, straight as an arrow, with a straight nose, rather thin lips for his race, and a pair of piercing dark eyes. He wore a sort of Turkish rig, and a cloak of ostrich plumes, dyed in many colors. His head-dress was of the same feathers, and taken all round, he was a right royal king."

Sam Nelson start and shiver as the African stepped upon the deck, for in the Kroo king he saw the husband of the woman who had died in the blue water beyond the surf years before. But, the king did not know him, for I saw that Muchacha had fallen in the face, and his countenance did not change in the least.

"Why are you here?" he said, turning to Captain Dallas, and speaking excellent English.

"You get no slaves here; Muchacha does not trade in the flesh and blood of his brothers."

"I do not seek slaves, king," was the reply.

"I am here for ivory and gold-dust."

"Then my brother is welcome. I am rich in ivory and gold-dust, and will freight your ship."

The captain began to trade at once, and as a prelude made presents to the king and the principal men, a ceremony not to be omitted in barter with the African kings. Then the price of elephant tusks was fixed, and the king went away and the schooner ran into the river and came to anchor there, where she could land her cargo readily.

"He don't know me, Lawton," hissed Sam Nelson, through his set teeth. "If he had, I wouldn't give you a pinch of gold-dust for my life. Curse him! I hoped he was dead."

"Who is he, Sam?"

"The husband of that woman I told you about. Don't dare to breathe it above your breath, for he would have my life."

We stayed there five days and traded. Every day men came in from distant villages, bringing their ivory and gold-dust, and the captain paid them in condemned muskets, six-cent calico, and powder that would have made a government inspector laugh, so harmless was it. The bulk didn't agree with the sample, you see. That which we gave them for use was good enough, but the *kegs*—by George! You might have tossed them into the blazing fire and it wouldn't have blown a humming-bird off a limb. But at last the king said he would trade no more, and the captain was satisfied, for he had not expected so much ivory from one place.

I had noticed one thing: the king was very kind to every one of the crew except Sam Nelson.

He never spoke to him or looked at him, and the mate was not very much at ease. Most of the time he spent on board, and avoided the king as much as possible. At last the captain announced that the next day the schooner would sail, and that they only waited for the final parade of the king's troops, and a great feast, before they left.

At midday the sound of gongs and wild-clashing cymbals was heard, and out of the green forest behind the barracon marched the army of King Muchacha. First came two hundred Amazons, armed with spear and shield, their hair braided in fantastic fashion, and their eyes gleaming like lights below.

Then, borne in a palanquin, came the king, with his favorite wife beside him. They were carried upon the shoulders of twenty strong men, who advanced with a swinging step, proud of the burden which they bore. Behind them marched eight hundred native warriors, in all the pride, pomp and circumstance of savage warfare. We stood looking at them with delight as they marched to and fro, after the king had been set down near us. The Amazons court-marched and came past us, when I saw the king suddenly lay his hand upon the shoulder of the mate.

As if it had been a signal, the Amazons wheeled, and seizing the unfortunate man in his arms, the king sprang in among the female warriors.

"Black-hearted dog!" he hissed. "I have you now."

The native warriors formed a square about Sam Nelson and the king, while we, in utter astonishment, looked at them expecting to see them rush upon us!

"Listen!" cried the king, extending his brown hand. "Years ago, when I was young, I took a wife who was beautiful as the morning. This slave, this dog, enticed her on board his ship and then put iron on her hands, to make her a slave. But she, preferring death, sprang into the sea and died before my eyes. I have prayed to my God to send the wretch back to me, and when I saw him yonder I knew that my prayer had been heard. As for you, who are good men, we are friends; but this dog dies!"

"Help, captain!" screamed Sam Nelson. "Don't let the black dog murder me."

"What could we do? Twenty men, and few of them bearing arms, were no match for a thousand blacks. Captain Dallas attempted to plead for his mate, but the king waved him back.

"Talk to the winds and the waves, the trees and the rocks; they may hear you, but ask not Muchacha to spare the life of this man. My ears are stopped by the death-cry of my wife."

He made a signal, and Sam Nelson was dragged down to the king's boat, which lay on the sand. We saw the boat push out of the river to a distance of perhaps a hundred yards from the shore, containing the king, four oarsmen, two gigantic women and the prisoner. Every movement was plainly apparent from the shore, and we could see them lift him up and clasp a pair of handcuffs, which the king had traded for, on his wrists. Then, thundering across the sea, came the tremendous voice of the king:

"As Maratta died, so die you! This is Muchacha's vengeance!"

There came a shriek of agony from the lips of Sam Nelson, and we saw him struggling in the arms of the two gigantic women. Then came a loud splash, a single horrible, gurgling cry, and that was the last of Sam Nelson. The king came back, calm, but determined.

"My friends," he said, "I have avenged my wife. Go, when you will; never shall harm come to you at the hands of Muchacha and his men."

We sailed before night, but as the schooner passed over the spot where the mate went down there was not one among us who could say that the terrible act of the king's vengeance had been, Sam Nelson did not deserve his fate.

Mountain Tom's Oath.

BY OLL COOMES.

The glow of a camp-fire by the side of a little stream that came bubbling down the mountain, shone full upon the handsome face of Mountain Tom, as he stood in the attitude of intense listening.

"Dashed if I don't believe these diggings are haunted," he mused, thoughtfully. "I am sure I heard something, so I think I had better put out my fire for fear of trouble. They say the Cheyennes are about."

"Yes," said a sweet young voice, as he turned, "there are Indians in the vicinity; and Mountain Tom is in danger."

"Great Columbia!" burst from the lips of the astonished young hunter; "what does this mean? Who are you that knows me? An angel or a fairy?"

"Simply a friend," she answered; "but put out your light," and with a wave of the hand she disappeared.

Mountain Tom uttered a low, soft whistle.

"Gone, by mercy!" he exclaimed, "and with her goes my heart. I'll swear she was the prettiest girl I ever saw. Dast the luck!"

He put out his fire by raking, the while, into the little stream with his moss-covered foot.

Then, under the darkness, he listened and pondered.

The waving pines rustled their robes in the breath of the summer night, and the little cascade at his feet sung its unvarying, mellow song.

For full five minutes Mountain Tom stood silent and undecided. The lovely maiden had filled his breast with strange emotions. He could not dismiss her from his thoughts. In his mind arose the questions: who was she? and where did she belong?

The sound of footsteps cut short his meditations. A heavy hand was laid upon his shoulders, and a friendly voice hissed:

"At last, my gay cavalier!"

Then strong arms pinioned him, and he was hurled violently to the earth.

A savage yell arose on the night.

Mountain Tom knew his enemies, Jubal Krayfoot, a white renegade, and his Cheyenne followers. Months before our hero had caused to know Jubal down for insulting a woman in Denver, and since that time the renegade had dogged the young mountaineer's footsteps for revenge.

He knew there was no mercy in the villain's heart, and that death only would release him from savage torture.

Jubal Krayfoot stood for all of an hour gloating over the capture of his enemy.

Afar off in the distant valley, the lights, twinkling in the quiet town, mocked the helplessness of the prisoner.

"And now for a punishment that will eclipse the martyrs," said the renegade; and Mountain Tom was lashed to a log, and then both log and man carried to the little cascade, and placed in the stream under the falling water.

Then began a torture that human nature could not long endure. The water, ice-cold, falling upon his head, chilled him to very marrow, and soon produced a pain more terrible than any that could have been devised by the Roman Inquisition.

A cry of agony burst from Tom's lips.

The clear twang of a horn came leaping down the mountain.

The renegade and his red followers started aghast, for they were superstitious.

The fall of the cascade became hushed, the murmur of the water ceased, and the little stream was gone!

Krayfoot trembled with fear, for he believed the vengeance of God was near. He crept to the edge of the stream and placed his hand in it to assure himself that it *had* suddenly ceased to be a flowing stream. He started up when he found no water there.

The villain and his followers listened. They heard the fall of water off behind them, as though a stream had suddenly started into existence there. With this discovery they gathered courage. They believed that some one up

the valley had turned the water aside into another channel; and all hurried away to inquire into the mystery.

A moment later Mountain Tom felt a soft hand feeling over him, and then his bonds dropped from his aching limbs.

"Come now, Mountain Tom," said a soft voice; "hurry, before they get you again."

Tom arose and followed his deliverer, who proved to be that same little fairy that had appeared unto him in camp.

She led the way along the now empty stream, and in a few moments came to an opening in the very bed of the water-course.

"Enter," she said, and Tom obeyed, scarcely aware of what he was doing, for his brain was still throbbing.

He descended a flight of steps into a dark, dismal cavern. The girl came after him, and then closed the entrance by a door that swung upward and closed with a snap.

The next instant Tom heard the rush of water over the door, and felt a few cold drops fall upon his hand. He